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For Immediate Release

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Campaign Endorses Legislation Introduced by Representative Fudge to Prevent Childhood Obesity
Bill Would Analyze BMI Measurements of Children

Washington, DC (September 21, 2012) – In recognition of Childhood Obesity Awareness month, Representative Marcia Fudge (D-OH) today introduced the Measures to Prevent Childhood Obesity Act. With the legislation, vaccination records would include important body mass index (BMI) information for children. Additionally, the bill would provide grants to states to use this standardized data to help measure the rate and trends of obesity among children as well as providing information on what efforts States could be doing to help prevent the obesity epidemic.

“Childhood obesity is at unacceptable levels. Today, nearly 1 in 3 children struggle with obesity,” said Campaign Co-Founder Stephanie Silverman. “Not only do 30 states have child obesity rates of 30 percent or more, a 2009 study in the journal Health Affairs concluded that the costs of hospitalizations related to childhood obesity rose from \$125.9 million in 2001 to \$237.6 million in 2005.”

The grants provided in legislation will also help States disseminate information about BMI results to parents and children. Silverman added, “States already collect immunization data, this bill provided additional new tools in the fight against the childhood obesity epidemic.”

Today, there are nearly 20 million children in America who have obesity, yet many of them, and their parents, are unaware of their weight status. The screening provided by the Measures to Prevent Childhood Obesity Act would be a significant step forward in ensuring that children, families and guardians – along with caregivers – are doing their part in preventing and, where appropriate, treating those with obesity. BMI, a ratio of height and weight, is a standard calculation used to determine an individual’s body fat percentage.

Representative Fudge said, “Obesity is a complex disease requiring a multitude of approaches and, as such, we need to continue to push forward effective, pragmatic solutions to an epidemic costing the nation almost \$200 billion each year. One way to accomplish this is to make sure that parents, families, caregivers and all healthcare professionals take appropriate steps to track, monitor and report on the weight status of their patients by tracking their BMI. This legislation is a first step in helping raise awareness about the weight status of our nation's children as well as communicating effective commonsense solutions to preventing this costly epidemic.”

The Campaign urges Congress to support the Measures to Prevent Childhood Obesity Act and the use of BMI as a measure to assess and improve the health of the nation's children.

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About the Campaign to End Obesity

The Campaign to End Obesity is dedicated to reversing America's costliest disease. Ending this epidemic requires change – in individuals, institutions and communities. The Campaign convenes leaders from industry, academia, public health and associations to speak with one voice for federal policies to reverse the obesity epidemic and promote healthy weight in children and adults.