



## **Congressional Workshop Series: Fact vs. Fiction: The TRUTH about OBESITY in America**

### **BACKGROUND**

Obesity is one of the most costly diseases affecting America's adults and children. In fact, it is the single greatest contributing factor to every other major chronic disease afflicting Americans today. Recently, Congress has worked diligently to address the prevention of chronic conditions – including obesity – in the enactment of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) and the reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act. However, meaningful discussion of obesity prevention is unique in that the stigma attached to obesity carries with it substantial preconceived notions of obesity causes, misinformation and prejudices.

Unfortunately, too many Americans – both inside and outside-the-beltway – think that obesity prevention is only about eating less and exercising more. While, a key ingredient in addressing obesity is often caloric intake compared to calories expended, the scenario is much more complex than a simple calculation. This workshop will highlight and discuss the many complex, environmental, genetic, and physiological and other considerations that constitute an individual's weight as well as the potential health benefits of weight loss.

The Campaign to End Obesity has long supported broad prevention efforts – especially those aimed at increasing access to fresh, affordable and healthy produce and those that enable Americans to be more active; however, these efforts, on their own, are not enough. Treating obesity – and its associated conditions – costs \$168 billion annually – more than 17 percent of all the nation's health care costs. Promoting strategies to prevent and treat obesity is of utmost importance and understanding the root causes, health effects and costs associated with it is a vital first step.

### **THE WORKSHOP**

The workshop will help Members of Congress and their staff, as well as key members of the public health community, academia and industry identify policy solutions for addressing obesity by answering these and other questions:

#### **What are the main contributors to overweight and obesity?**

- What are some of the common myths associated with overweight and obesity?
- What are some potential catalysts for the treatment of overweight and obesity?
- What factors contribute to overweight and obesity?

#### **What are meaningful and significant interventions for overweight and obesity?**

- What is considered "meaningful weight loss"?
- What does a comprehensive obesity treatment program entail?
- What role does public policy play in facilitating behavioral interventions for persons with obesity?
- What is the appropriate role of lawmakers in preventing obesity among children and adults in America?

#### **CONCLUSION: How Do These Attitudes/Misconceptions Affect Public Policy in the United States?**

## **Workshop Details**

### **“Fact vs. Fiction: The Truth About Obesity in America”**

July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011

210 Cannon House Office Building

To RSVP, contact Chris Fox ([chris@obesitycampaign.org](mailto:chris@obesitycampaign.org)).