FIGHTING OBESITY: Support the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act

Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (H.R. 2415, S. 1184)

This bill seeks to provide Medicare beneficiaries and healthcare

providers with an opportunity to provide obese individuals with the chance to lose weight. Obese individuals would have access to intensive behavioral therapy that would be provided by a primary care physician or other health care providers, such as a dietitian. The overall goal is to develop and implement a program that will treat, reduce, and prevent obesity in Americans.

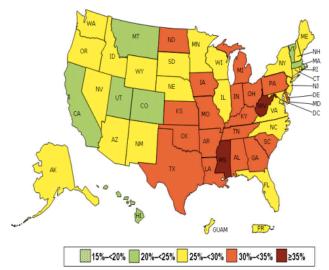
Benefits From Supporting the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act

Obesity is a disease that should be treated no differently than any other illness. This bill will ensure that millions of Americans struggling with obesity have access to safe and affordable treatment options for losing weight. Healthcare costs related to obesity were over \$250 billion in 2013¹. Encouraging individuals to lose weight will reduce the number of obesity related diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular heart disease, hyperlipidemia, and in turn reduce overall healthcare costs.

The Role of Registered Dietitians in Treating Obesity

Registered dietitians are the most qualified individuals to help those with obesity because of their extensive nutrition backgrounds. Dietitians' knowledge of nutrition and exercise will allow them to effectively treat obese individuals. According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, a dietitian is two times more likely to help a patient lose significant weight and increase exercise. Also, the cost of a registered dietitian is much less than any other healthcare provider². Therefore, making this act successful and affordable.

Prevalence* of Self-Reported Obesity Among U.S. Adults by State and Territory, BRFSS, 2013



Prevalence of Obesity in America

Over 1/3 of American adults are obese and 1 in 20 have extreme obesity^{1,3}. The prevalence of obesity in the U.S continues to increase at a steady rate. Since the 1960s, the incidences of obesity increased from 13.4% to 35.7% of U.S. adults³. If current obesity trends continue, it is estimated that healthcare costs related to obesity could reach \$800 billion by 2030. The following figure shows the prevalence of obesity throughout the nation. The obesity epidemic will only continue to increase if some type of intervention does not occur.

Source: Behavorial Risk Factor Surveillance Systems, CDC.

1. Ogden CL, Carroll MD, Kit BK, Flegal KM. Prevalence of childhood and adult obesity in the United States, 2011-2012. *JAMA*. 2014;311(8):806-814

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Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Adult obesity facts. Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/adult.html. Accessed 11/12/14.

