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OBESITY ACTION COALITION APPLAUDS FLORIDA LEGISLATURE FOR OBESITY EFFORTS

Tampa, FL – The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) applauds the Florida Legislature for recognizing April 10, 2008 as “Obesity Awareness Day.” In addition, the House also declared that leaders have a responsibility to encourage and promote healthy lifestyles for the citizens of this state, including communicating information about healthy diet, the importance of physical activity and the availability of clinical treatment.

On April 2, 2008, OAC Chairman Jim Fivecoat and Joseph Nadglowski, Jr., OAC President and CEO, visited with key legislative officials from both the House and Senate and discussed the impact of obesity on the state of Florida. “Meeting with these officials truly gave the OAC the chance to elaborate on the seriousness of this disease and articulate the impact it has on the state of Florida,” said Mr. Nadglowski.

One of the key topics of the discussions was the importance of a comprehensive and collaborative approach to address the obesity epidemic. Mr. Fivecoat shared that, “Too often obesity is seen as solely a personal failing and efforts to date have been less than successful due to the failure to address the obesity epidemic through a partnership between individuals, employers, insurers and government. This type of partnership would benefit all of the parties: individuals through improved quality of health and life; and employers, insurers and government through lower long-term costs.”

Obesity is a serious health epidemic that targets one in three Americans and nearly one in four Floridians. It is estimated that more than 93 million Americans are obese, with that number predicted to climb to 120 million in the next five years. In order to address this epidemic, the OAC recognizes and promotes increasing prevention efforts and improving access to safe and effective treatment options, such as nutrition counseling, physician supervised weight-loss (with or without pharmaceuticals) and for appropriately selected candidates, bariatric surgery.

“As an organization that represents the struggles of the obese population, we are extremely pleased to see a state taking proactive steps in managing the obesity crisis; however, this is simply the beginning. Nationwide, we are seeing dramatic limits on access to obesity-management services. It is imperative that all states take the first step and recognize there is an obesity crisis. We also encourage those affected by this disease to contact their state representatives and express their obesity-related health concerns and the many co-morbid conditions often associated with it,” said Mr. Nadglowski.

For more information on the OAC, please visit www.obesityaction.org or contact the OAC National Office at (800) 717-3117 or info@obesityaction.org. To view a PDF of the House Resolution, please click here.

The mission of the OAC is to elevate and empower those affected by obesity through education, advocacy and support. The OAC strives to educate obese individuals, family members and the public on obesity. In addition, the OAC will increase obesity education, work to improve access to medical treatments for the obese, advocate for safe and effective treatments and strive to eliminate the negative stigma associated with obesity.

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