



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **OBESITY ACTION COALITION APPLAUDS LOUISIANA LEGISLATURE FOR OBESITY EFFORTS**

**Tampa, Fla.** – The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) applauds the Louisiana Legislature for designating May 12, 2008 as Obesity Awareness Day, and for urging obesity education and prevention in their state. In addition, the resolution states, “Obesity Awareness Day will allow participants to provide education on the public health risks of obesity and to recognize that obesity is a statewide public health problem which may be impacted by public health initiatives such as health and physical education, and participants will be provided with treatment options for obesity, including preventive care, diet and exercise and surgery and long term follow-up care.”

“As an organization that represents the struggles of the obese population on a daily basis, 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, as Louisiana displayed, and recognize there is an obesity crisis. We also encourage those affected by this disease to contact their state representatives, and express their health concerns concerning obesity and the many co-morbid conditions often associated with it,” said Joseph Nadglowski, Jr., OAC President and CEO.

The OAC would also like to thank the following organizations/companies for their assistance and support in forming Louisiana-based obesity initiatives: *the Louisiana Business Group on Health; Johnson & Johnson, Ethicon Endo-Surgery, Inc.; the Louisiana Obesity Council; Ceridian LifeWorks; Gilsbar; the Louisiana Dietetics Association; LifeScan; Surgical Specialists of Louisiana; the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus; and the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus*

Obesity is a serious health epidemic that targets one in three Americans. 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.

For more information on the Obesity Action Coalition, please visit [www.obesityaction.org](http://www.obesityaction.org) or contact the OAC National Office at (800) 717-3117 or [info@obesityaction.org](mailto:info@obesityaction.org).

*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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