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January 27, 2022

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chair, House Committee on Energy & Commerce
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member, House Committee on Energy & Commerce
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Anna Eshoo
Chair, House Energy & Commerce Health Subcommittee
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Brett Guthrie
Ranking Member, House Energy & Commerce Health Subcommittee
United States House of Representatives

Dear Chair Pallone, Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers, Chair Eshoo and Ranking Member Guthrie:

On behalf of the more than 75,000 members of the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) who support the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (TROA), we urge the Committee to formally request a fiscal score for this critical legislation from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). In brief, TROA will improve Medicare beneficiaries' access to intensive behavioral therapy and allow Medicare Part D to cover FDA-approved anti-obesity medications – key areas where Medicare should modernize its benefits to support access to obesity care based on established treatment guidelines.

Recently, the leadership from the Congressional Black Caucus, Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (Congressional Tri-Caucus) sent you a letter – urging the full Energy and Commerce Committee and the Health Subcommittee to strongly “consider the merits of the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act.” The Tri-Caucus leaders highlighted that, “despite the widespread societal cost of obesity, both COVID-related and otherwise, many public and private health plans, including Medicare, do not provide coverage for evidence-based obesity treatments... and that as a result, too many Americans are dying preventable deaths.” In closing, they “urged the Energy and Commerce Committee to hold a hearing on this important bill at its earliest convenience.”

Since being first introduced in 2013, TROA has enjoyed strong and ever-growing bipartisan support – with nearly 200 members of Congress cosponsoring this legislation in each of the last two Congresses. Past supporters for TROA also included Representatives McMorris Rodgers, Eshoo and Guthrie when they were not in leadership positions on the committee. Support in this Congress is also rapidly growing with 18 Senators and

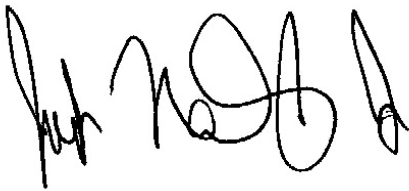
The mission of the Obesity Action Coalition is to elevate and empower individuals affected by obesity through education, advocacy and support.

more than 125 House members supporting passage of TROA, including 40 members of the Congressional Tri-Caucus. Despite this broad and bipartisan support for this legislation, TROA has never been scored by CBO or even formally considered by the Health Subcommittee since its introduction nearly a decade ago!

Given the ongoing societal threat from COVID and its demonstrably dangerous relationship with obesity, we are troubled that Congress continues to be complacent about acting on this legislation. COVID has shown us first-hand what happens when we don't care for people with obesity -- both medically and as a society. Survival rates are lower, and among survivors, health outcomes are significantly worse than people with other diseases who can access the care that they need.

What can we do for the many families who have suffered so much these past two years? We must act and work together to ensure that Americans have access to all evidence-based obesity treatment avenues. Passage of the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act would be a tremendous step in that direction. Please join us in this effort!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Nadglowski, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Joseph Nadglowski, Jr.
President/CEO

OAC's Vision

As one of the nation's leading voices on obesity, our core focuses are to raise awareness and improve access to the prevention and treatment of obesity, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination, elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health and offer a community of support for the individual affected.