



# ADVOCACY NEWS ADVOCACY ACTION

## **The Start of 2011 and OAC Advocacy Initiatives**

by Chris Gallagher, OAC Policy Consultant

The OAC continues to be very busy in its advocacy efforts to educate policymakers at both the federal and state level. Since January 1, 2011, Joe Nadglowski, OAC President and CEO, has joined with OAC members and other advocates affected by obesity in visiting the offices of more than 50 legislators on Capitol Hill and participating in three different special events – standing up for the rights of those affected by obesity.

### **ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF FIRST LADY MICHELLE OBAMA'S *LET'S MOVE* CAMPAIGN**

On February 9, Mr. Nadglowski participated in an invitation-only event held by First Lady Michelle Obama's office to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the *Let's Move!* Campaign.

In a personal speech during the celebration, the First Lady shared how this issue has affected her as a parent. She also highlighted the momentum *Let's Move!* has gained and her view of what needs to be done to reduce childhood obesity in a generation.

Finally, to provide parents and families with information on healthy food and physical activity options for children, the First Lady unveiled a national *Let's Move!* public service awareness campaign, created by the Ad Council, that will reach 33,000 media outlets.

### **OBAMA ADMINISTRATION HOLDS FORUM ON EMPLOYER-WELLNESS INCENTIVE PROGRAMS**

On February 24, OAC leadership spoke at a half-day Incentive-based Worksite Wellness Program Forum sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – the federal agency overseeing Medicare, Medicaid and other public health programs. The forum brought together stakeholders from employers, unions and

patient advocacy groups, including OAC Board member, Ted Kyle, RPh, MBA, to share concerns and discuss ways of implementing worksite wellness regulations related to healthcare reform.

During the forum, Mr. Kyle pointed out that, "Setting arbitrary body mass index (BMI) goals doesn't work in wellness programs relating to obesity. What is needed is access to effective treatment and a focus on longer-term outcomes."

### **OAC AND OBESITY CARE COMMUNITY URGE FDA TO PRACTICE FAIRNESS IN EVALUATING OBESITY DRUGS**

On March 22, OAC joined with representatives from The Obesity Society, the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery and the American Dietetic Association in meeting with key staff of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regarding recent FDA activity surrounding review and approval of current and pending drugs to treat obesity.

During the meeting, concerns were expressed to Janet Woodcock, MD, Director of FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, over the perception by many that in reviewing and approving new obesity treatments, the FDA has set up daunting regulatory hurdles unlike those that face new medications for any other disease. In addition, the groups also offered specific recommendations regarding how the FDA can improve its review process.

### **NATIONAL HEALTHY WEIGHT MATTERS MONTH**

On March 15, OAC members came together to urge members of Congress to support a resolution that will designate the month of March 2012 as National Healthy Weight Matters Month. Modeled after the OAC's *Your Weight Matters Campaign*, individuals across the country

would be encouraged to initiate a conversation with their healthcare professional about their weight during National Healthy Weight Matters Month.

OAC advocates visited more than 20 congressional offices in search of House and Senate champions to take leadership roles in supporting passage of National Healthy Weight Matters Month. A list of Capitol Hill staff that were visited and their contact information can be found to the right. We encourage all of you that either live in the state of these legislators or have a special connection with these policymakers to email them a personal message along the following lines:

*"I understand that you recently met with representatives from the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) regarding support for a congressional resolution to designate March 2012 as National Healthy Weight Matters Month. As someone who is personally affected by obesity, I urge you to support this important initiative as it will encourage all Americans who struggle with their weight to initiate a conversation with a healthcare professional about how they can best address their excess weight or obesity."*

*Please let me know if [INSERT REPRESENTATIVE'S NAME] will support this critical effort. I look forward to hearing from you soon.*

*Thank you,  
[INSERT YOUR FULL NAME]*

## **CAPITOL HILL STAFF TO SEND A PERSONAL MESSAGE TO:**

### **CALIFORNIA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)  
Nora Connors, Health Legislative Assistant  
Nora\_Connors@feinstein.senate.gov

Representative Lois Capps (D-CA)  
Adriane Casalotti, Health Legislative Assistant  
Adriane.Casalotti@mail.house.gov

### **FLORIDA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL)  
Susie Ahn, Health Legislative Assistant  
susie\_ahn@billnelson.senate.gov

Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL)  
Sally Canfield, Legislative Director  
Sally\_Canfield@rubio.senate.gov

Congresswoman Kathy Castor (D-FL)  
Elizabeth Brown, Health Legislative Assistant  
Elizabeth.Brown@mail.house.gov

### **ILLINOIS CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL)  
Binta Beard, Health Legislative Assistant  
Binta\_Beard@durbin.senate.gov

Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL)  
Shauna McCarthy, Health Policy Advisor  
shauna\_mccarthy@kirk.senate.gov

Representative Aaron Schock (R-IL)  
Margie Almanza, Health Legislative Assistant  
Margie.Almanza@mail.house.gov

### **IOWA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA)  
Craig Martinez, Health Legislative Assistant  
Craig\_Martinez@help.senate.gov  
&  
Andi Lipstein Fristedt, Health Policy Fellow  
Andi\_LipsteinFristedt@help.senate.gov

### **MASSACHUSETTS CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

Senator John Kerry (D-MA)  
Meghan Thompson, Health Legislative Assistant  
Megan\_Thompson@kerry.senate.gov

### **MICHIGAN CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)  
Scott M. Palyo, M.D., Health Care Legislative Fellow  
Scott\_Palyo@stabenow.senate.gov

**NEW JERSEY CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ)  
Veronica Valdivieso, Health Legislative Assistant  
Veronica\_Valdivieso@lautenberg.senate.gov

**NEW YORK CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY)  
Kathryn Tanner, Children & Families Legislative Assistant  
Kathryn\_Tanner@gillibrand.senate.gov

**NORTH DAKOTA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

Senator Kent Conrad (D-ND)  
Meeting with Dana Halverson, Health Legislative Assistant  
Dana\_Halvorson@conrad.senate.gov

**OREGON CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR)  
Susan Lexer, Health Legislative Assistant  
susan\_lexer@merkley.senate.gov

**PENNSYLVANIA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

Congressman Mark S. Critz (D-PA)  
Nathan S. Catanese, Health Legislative Assistant  
Nathan.Catanese@mail.house.gov

**TENNESSEE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN)  
Mary-Sumpter Lapinski, Health Legislative Assistant  
marysumpter\_lapinski@alexander.senate.gov

Senator Bob Corker (R-TN)  
Anne Oswald, Health Legislative Assistant  
Anne\_Oswalt@corker.senate.gov

Representative Marsha Blackburn (R-TN)  
Cara Dalmolin, Legislative Director  
cara.dalmolin@mail.house.gov

Representative Jim Cooper (D-TN)  
Ruth McDonald, Health Legislative Assistant  
Ruth.McDonald@mail.house.gov

**UTAH CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT)  
Hayden Rhudy, Health Legislative Assistant  
hayden\_rhudy@hatch.senate.gov

Representative Jason Chaffetz (R-UT)  
Alisia Essig, Children/Families Legislative  
alisia.essig@mail.house.gov



# ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



VIBRANT COMMUNITY



NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS



ANNUAL CONVENTION



ADVOCACY



PUBLIC EDUCATION

## LEARN, CONNECT, ENGAGE

The OAC knows that the journey with weight can be challenging but we also know that great things happen when we learn, connect and engage. That is why the OAC Community exists. Our Community is designed to provide quality education, ongoing support programs, an opportunity to connect, and a place to take action on important issues.

### Through the OAC Community, you can get access to:

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
  - Community Discussion Forum
  - Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections
- AND MUCH MORE**



**JOIN TODAY: GO TO [OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN](http://OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN)**

[info@obesityaction.org](mailto:info@obesityaction.org)

(800) 717-3117 | (813) 872-7835 | Fax: (813) 873-7838



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