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Dear Ms. Hedbom,

We are contacting you today on behalf of the more than 75,000 members of the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC), a national non-profit organization representing individuals affected by the disease of obesity. It has come to our attention that the obesity-focused imagery used in *Obesity in African-Americans: Is Physiology to Blame?* greatly perpetuates the negative weight bias and stigma associated with the disease of obesity. Additionally, the title itself also perpetuates stigma with the word "blame." Quite often, society aims to "blame" someone with obesity, even though there are countless studies that have proven obesity is more than self-responsibility. Obesity is a serious, complex disease affecting more than 93 million Americans. The disease is driven by genetics, metabolic adaptations, psychosocial factors, environmental factors and more. It also is associated with a myriad of other conditions, such as type 2 diabetes, hypertension and more.

The Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity states:

A Rudd Center study found that 72% of photographs paired with online news stories about obesity are stigmatizing toward individuals with obesity. Additionally, we found that 65% of videos paired with online news stories about obesity stigmatize adults with obesity, and 77% of videos stigmatize youth with obesity. These images degrade and dehumanize individuals with obesity, while spreading false assumptions and oversimplifying the complex issue of obesity.

On behalf of all OAC members, we respectfully request that you immediately remove this image and issue a public apology. Furthermore, we request that you implement policies to ensure that this type of imagery is not used in the future. If you would like to discuss this issue or the issue of weight bias and stigma with me personally, please feel free to contact me at our National office at (800) 717-3117.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Joseph Nadglowski in black ink.

Joseph Nadglowski
OAC President and CEO

Handwritten signature of Michelle Vicari in black ink.

Michelle Vicari
OAC Chairwoman of the Board

Handwritten signature of Patricia M. Nece in black ink.

Patricia Nece, JD, Vice-Chairwoman of the Board