



National Lieutenant Governors Association

1 **Resolution in Support of the Treatment and Prevention of Obesity**

2 **WHEREAS**, obesity is a growing epidemic, affecting about 40% of adults in the United States,¹ and is
3 recognized as a chronic disease by many leading medical professional and patient organizations,
4 including the American College of Cardiology, American Medical Association, American Heart
5 Association, American Academy of Family Physicians, American Board of Obesity Medicine, Endocrine
6 Society, and the Obesity Society; and

7 **WHEREAS**, experts and researchers agree obesity is a complex disease influenced by various
8 psychological, environmental, and genetic factors and those affected by the disease are at higher risk of
9 developing many health-related conditions such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular
10 disease, stroke, and some cancers;² and

11 **WHEREAS**, all types of citizens are affected by the disease; however, according to the National Center
12 for Health Statistics, it has a disproportionate impact among lower income individuals, those with less
13 education, and minority communities;³ and

14 **WHEREAS**, in addition to its human costs, obesity has a significant economic burden; in 2014, the
15 United States spent \$1.42 trillion in direct and indirect medical treatment costs for health conditions
16 causally related to obesity and overweight;⁴ and

17 **WHEREAS**, while prevention programs are an essential tool in mitigating the human and economic costs
18 of this public health crisis, it is imperative for state policymakers to also consider the need to make
19 comprehensive care and treatment available to individuals and families currently affected by obesity; and

20 **WHEREAS**, studies show bias and stigma against people affected by obesity, both societal and among
21 healthcare professionals, are significant barriers to effectively treating the disease;⁵ and

¹ Hales CM, Carroll MD, Fryar CD, Ogden CL. Prevalence of obesity among adults and youth: United States, 2015–2016. NCHS data brief, no 288. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2017. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db288.htm>

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. New CDC Data Shows US Adults Still Struggling with Obesity. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. August 31, 2017. <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2017/a0831-obesity-data-maps.html>

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity. Data, Trend and Maps [online]. [accessed May 02, 2018]. URL: <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/data-trends-maps/index.html>

⁴ Waters H, DeVol R. Weighing Down America: The Health And Economic Impact Of Obesity; 2016 <http://www.milkeninstitute.org/publications/view/833>

⁵ Puhl, R. M., & Heuer, C. A. (2010). Obesity Stigma: Important Considerations for Public Health. American Journal of Public Health, 100(6), 1019–1028. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2866597/>



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22 **WHEREAS**, research suggests weight loss of 5% to 10% can improve health and reduce the risk of some
23 obesity-related diseases⁶ and can thereby advance the goals of state public health initiatives to reduce
24 chronic disease, improve health outcomes, and control healthcare costs;

25 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA)
26 recognizes that steps should be taken to eliminate the stigma of obesity that impedes treatment and to
27 increase opportunities for Americans to receive comprehensive care to manage this chronic disease; and

28 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the NLGA encourages states to establish statewide obesity councils
29 and taskforces or to otherwise use existing structures in place to elevate a focus on obesity as a significant and
30 costly chronic disease, and to explore possible solutions for the growing epidemic, including the need for
31 additional training of current and future health care professionals, who are critical to the diagnosis and
32 treatment of obesity; and

33 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLGA recognizes that states can take a leading role in addressing
34 this growing epidemic by providing adequate access to treatment options for state employees and in other
35 publicly funded healthcare programs and can serve as a model for the private sector in managing the
36 human toll and financial impact of obesity on health care costs.

ADOPTED, this day, the 29th of June, 2018.

Sponsors: Lt. Governor Justin Fairfax (D – Virginia), Lt. Governor Adam Gregg (R – Iowa),
Lt. Governor Randy McNally (R – Tennessee), Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser (R – Louisiana),
Lt. Governor John Sanchez (R – New Mexico), Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman (D – Connecticut), Lt.
Governor David Zuckerman (D – Vermont)

⁶ Wing, R. R., Lang, W., Wadden, T. A., Safford, M., Knowler, W. C., Bertoni, A. G., the Look AHEAD Research Group. (2011). Benefits of Modest Weight Loss in Improving Cardiovascular Risk Factors in Overweight and Obese Individuals With Type 2 Diabetes. *Diabetes Care*, 34(7), 1481–1486.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3120182/>