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For Immediate Release

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### **Campaign Applauds New Report by Surgeon General on Need to Fight Obesity**

Washington, D.C. (January 29, 2010) – The Campaign to End Obesity today praised the commitment of the U.S. Surgeon General Regina Benjamin, First Lady Michelle Obama and Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to tackle America’s obesity epidemic. Surgeon General Benjamin released her report *The Surgeon General’s Vision for a Healthy and Fit Nation*, at an event with the First Lady and Secretary Kathleen Sebelius.

“This report reminded us all of the sobering statistics on the extent of the obesity crisis – we spend more money on treating obesity and its complications than we do treating all the cancers in America combined,” said Campaign Spokesperson Penny Lee. “The time to act is now and we are pleased that this Administration is serious and focused about reversing the rates of overweight and obesity in America.”

The Surgeon General’s report contained an overview of the rates and trends of the obesity epidemic, as well as strategies to help reduce the rates of overweight and obesity in America. The Campaign was pleased to see support for a number of proposals that have long been priorities of the Campaign, such as such as calling for medical professionals to measure body mass index (BMI). Having a patient know their BMI and whether or not it is within a healthy range is a key starting point for preventing and treating overweight and obesity.

The First Lady shared her own experience with the importance of tracking BMI, when she shared that her pediatrician measuring her children’s BMI was an important wake-up call. “We often simply don’t realize that...our kids could be in danger of becoming obese,” said Mrs. Obama, who will be announcing her own initiative in the coming days on addressing obesity in our nation’s children.

In addition, the Campaign will continue to advocate for other strategies included in the report such as increasing access to healthy foods and increasing opportunities for physical activity.

“We wholeheartedly agree with Dr. Benjamin that the future consequences of this continued epidemic are unacceptable and the Campaign looks forward to working with the First Lady, the Obama Administration, Congress, state and local governments, community organizations and other stakeholders, on ways in which we can help Americans achieve a healthier weight,” said Lee.

**About the Campaign**

The Campaign to End Obesity is dedicated to reversing America's costliest disease. Right now, two-thirds of adults and 1 in 3 children struggle with obesity. Taxpayers, governments and businesses spend billions on obesity-related conditions each year, including an estimated \$147 billion in medical costs.

Ending this epidemic requires change – in individuals, institutions and communities. The Campaign convenes leaders from industry, academia, public health and associations to speak with one voice for federal policies to reverse the obesity epidemic and promote healthy weight in children and adults.

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