

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING OBESITY

AWARENESS

2009 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: D. Chris Buttars

House Sponsor: John Dougall

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor designates Obesity Awareness Month in Utah and urges increased medical coverage for obesity procedures.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- designates September 2009 as Obesity Awareness Month in the state and September 5, 2009, as "Walk from Obesity" Day; and
- urges that health care providers increase coverage of overweight and obesity procedures as a means of preventing increased future health care costs to the state and to businesses.

Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:

WHEREAS, more than half of all American adults are overweight, representing approximately 69 million people;

WHEREAS, obese individuals have a 50% to 100% increased risk of premature death from all causes compared to individuals with a healthy weight;

WHEREAS, morbid obesity is associated with a myriad of serious conditions, including hypertension, type 2 diabetes mellitus, dyslipidemia, osteoarthritis, and gallbladder

30 disease;

31 WHEREAS, obesity can lead to a 50% to 100% increase in risk of death to an
32 individual from all causes;

33 WHEREAS, over 280,000 Americans die each year from obesity related diseases;

34 WHEREAS, obesity has been linked to increases in workers' compensation claims;

35 WHEREAS, studies show dramatically higher health care costs for overweight and
36 obese patients and lower productivity in the workplace;

37 WHEREAS, addressing obesity challenges requires an understanding of the interaction
38 of genetic, physiological, environmental, and behavioral factors and abandonment of the
39 historic prejudice that being overweight or obese was simply the result of personal lifestyle
40 decisions and therefore within the domain of individual responsibilities and not part of
41 traditional medical care;

42 WHEREAS, although Medicare recognized obesity as a disease in 2004, few treatment
43 options are currently reimbursable by most health plans;

44 WHEREAS, medical procedures have been developed to help improve the health of
45 obese patients;

46 WHEREAS, the American Diabetes Association, in its Standards of Care, advises
47 bariatric surgery be considered for adult patients with a Body Mass Index greater than 35
48 kg/mz and type 2 diabetes mellitus;

49 WHEREAS, medical studies have demonstrated that Laparoscopic Adjustable Gastric
50 Banding, Laproscopic Roux-En-Y Gastric Bypass, and other alternatives for the morbidly
51 obese supported by the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery result in
52 significant weight loss;

53 WHEREAS, another alternative, Laproscopic Bariatric surgery, has been demonstrated
54 to be an effective weight-loss alternative for the morbidly obese;

55 WHEREAS, a study of the economic impact of bariatric surgery shows, as a return of
56 investment, that the costs of bariatric surgery are fully recovered in just over two years;

57 WHEREAS, some health plans, including Medicare, Medicaid, Select Health, by way

58 of a rider, Deseret Mutual Benefits Association, Intermountain Health Care, Cigna, Public
59 Employees Health Program, ValueCare's University of Utah's plan, Blue Cross of both Texas
60 and Wyoming, Blue Cross Blue Shield of both Minnesota and Massachusetts, Fiserv Health,
61 Blue Cross/ValueCare through Kennecott, EBMS, and Molina, provide overweight and obese
62 health coverage; and

63 WHEREAS, covering overweight and obesity procedures will save health care and
64 health insurance providers the costs of covering the many related health conditions suffered by
65 the overweight and obese:

66 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
67 Governor concurring therein, designate the month of September 2009 as Obesity Awareness
68 Month and September 5, 2009, as "Walk from Obesity" Day in the state of Utah and urge
69 those affected by obesity, including health care professionals, educators, patients, businesses,
70 and families, to participate in activities that heighten awareness of obesity.

71 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge health care
72 and health insurance providers to include treatments for the overweight and the obese,
73 including surgical procedures, in their service plans as a means of preventing increased future
74 health care costs to the state and to businesses.

75 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Utah
76 Department of Health, the Utah Insurance Association, the Utah Health Care Association, the
77 National Association of Health Underwriters, the National Association of State
78 Comprehensive Insurance Plans, the Utah State Board of Education, the state's local school
79 boards, and local chambers of commerce within the state.