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RESOLUTION SUPPORTING OBESITY

AWARENESS

2009 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: D. Chris Buttars

House Sponsor: _____

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 April 2009 as Obesity Awareness Month in the state; and
▶ urges that health care providers increase coverage of overweight and obesity procedures as a means of preventing increased future health care costs.

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



28 disease;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

44 WHEREAS, medical studies have demonstrated that Laparoscopic Adjustable Gastric
45 Banding (LAGB) results in significant weight loss;

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

48 WHEREAS, a study of the economic impact of bariatric surgery shows that, while
49 bariatric surgery costs took more than six years to be fully recovered as recently as 2002, this
50 interval had now been reduced to just over two years in 2005;

51 WHEREAS, some health plans, including Medicare, Medicaid, Select Health, by way
52 of a rider, Deseret Mutual Benefits Association, Public Employees Health Program,
53 ValueCare's University of Utah's plan, Blue Cross of both Texas and Wyoming, Blue Cross
54 Blue Shield of both Minnesota and Massachusetts, Fiserv Health, Blue Cross/ValueCare
55 through Kennecott, EBMS, and Molina, provide overweight and obese health coverage; and

56 WHEREAS, covering overweight and obesity procedures will save health care and
57 health insurance providers the costs of covering the many related health conditions suffered by
58 the overweight and obese:

59 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
60 Governor concurring therein, designate the month of April 2009 as Obesity Awareness Month
61 in the state of Utah.

62 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge health care
63 and health insurance providers to include treatments for overweight and obesity, including
64 surgical procedures, in their service plans.

65 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Utah
66 Department of Health, the Utah Insurance Association, the Utah Health Care Association, the
67 National Association of Health Underwriters, and the National Association of State
68 Comprehensive Insurance Plans.

Legislative Review Note
as of 1-22-09 8:41 AM

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel

S.C.R. 4 - Resolution Supporting Obesity Awareness

Fiscal Note

2009 General Session

State of Utah

State Impact

Enactment of this bill will not require additional appropriations.

Individual, Business and/or Local Impact

Enactment of this bill likely will not result in direct, measurable costs and/or benefits for individuals, businesses, or local governments.
