



September, 2005

The Honorable Bill Frist, MD
Office of the Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support for the "Improved Nutrition and Physical Activity Act" and "Childhood Obesity Reduction Act"

Dear Senate Majority Leader Frist:

On behalf of The Endocrine Society, representing more than 11,000 physicians and scientists in the field of endocrinology, we strongly support your ongoing leadership and commitment to combating obesity in America. As you know, many of The Endocrine Society's members are engaged on a daily basis, not only in the prevention and treatment of obesity, but also in cutting edge research on the causes of this epidemic. In addition, we greatly appreciated the opportunity to provide input in the development and reintroduction of the "Improved Nutrition and Physical Activity Act" and the "Childhood Obesity Reduction Act." The Endocrine Society also appreciated the opportunity to testify before the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee on key obesity related issues such as metabolic syndrome.

Founded in 1916, our Society represents physicians and scientists who are dedicated to the advancement, promulgation, and clinical application of knowledge related to endocrinology. Our diverse membership represents medicine, molecular and cellular biology, biochemistry, physiology, genetics, immunology, education, industry, and allied health. Society members represent the full range of professionals engaged in research and treatment of endocrine disorders, such as obesity/lipids, thyroid disease, diabetes, reproduction, infertility, osteoporosis, growth hormone, pituitary tumors, and adrenal insufficiency.

In response to the request of your office, we wanted to provide additional suggestions to strengthen the aforementioned legislation as you move these important bills forward in Congress. The Society endorses both of these bills and suggests the following:

Childhood Obesity Reduction Act

- Expand the authorization for the Congressional Council on Obesity from 2 years to 5 years;
- Specify or provide criteria regarding the likely participants to serve on the Congressional Council on Obesity (providers, provider organizations, patients, researchers, etc.); and
- Link any new advisory council with the current high profile of the President's Council on Physical Fitness (such as the formation of a President's Council on Healthy Weight).

Improved Nutrition and Physical Activity Act

- Increase a specific focus on pediatric obesity (research, education, treatment);
- Examine the impact of schools (lunch programs) on childhood and eventual adult obesity;
- Initiate further community based research pilot projects; and
- Support training grants to increase the opportunity for continuing education by health professionals in nutrition, healthy eating, and activity.

Moreover, The Endocrine Society believes that there should be increased basic and clinical/translational research on the genetics, etiology, and treatment of obesity. Although we understand the limited federal resources and fiscal realities, we do know that research may open doors that will provide longer lasting solutions to dealing with the growing epidemic of obesity.

The Endocrine Society looks forward to working closely with you and your very capable staff to advance public policy solutions to combat the growing epidemic of obesity in America. Thank you for the opportunity to partner with your office on these very worthwhile initiatives. Please do not hesitate to contact The Endocrine Society if we may provide you with any assistance or additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrea Dunaif". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Andrea Dunaif, M.D.
President
The Endocrine Society