
By: **Delegates Stern, Barkley, Benson, Bobo, Bronrott, G. Clagett, V. Clagett, Conroy, Cryor, Donoghue, Elmore, Feldman, Franchot, Glassman, Gutierrez, Hixson, Howard, Hubbard, Kach, King, Krebs, Krysiak, Lee, Madaleno, Marriott, McHale, McKee, Montgomery, Murray, Nathan-Pulliam, Parker, Patterson, Sossi, Taylor, F. Turner, V. Turner, and Vaughn**

Introduced and read first time: February 3, 2005
Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Obesity Awareness**

3 FOR the purpose of recognizing obesity as an increasing health concern and cause of
4 rising medical costs in Maryland; declaring the month of November as Obesity
5 Awareness Month; and generally relating to obesity awareness.

6 WHEREAS, Maryland's leaders have a responsibility to encourage and promote
7 healthy lifestyles for the residents of the State, including communicating information
8 about healthy diet and the importance of physical activity; and

9 WHEREAS, Obesity is a serious medical condition; and

10 WHEREAS, The number of overweight and obese adults increased 62% between
11 1990 and 2002; and

12 WHEREAS, Presently 58% of adults in Maryland are overweight or obese, and
13 the frequency of these conditions increases with age; and

14 WHEREAS, In 2002, approximately 15.3% of children between the ages of 6 and
15 11 years old and 15.5% of adolescents between the ages of 12 and 19 years old were
16 overweight or at risk of being overweight; and

17 WHEREAS, Overweight and obese adults are at increased risk for
18 cardiovascular disease, diabetes, stroke, hypertension, gall bladder disease,
19 osteoarthritis, and some cancers; and

20 WHEREAS, Overweight children are at increased risk for hypertension,
21 asthma, sleep apnea, and diabetes as well as poor psychosocial functioning and
22 decreased well-being; and

23 WHEREAS, Obesity ranks second only to smoking as a preventable cause of
24 death; and

1 WHEREAS, A study by the Centers for Disease Control estimates that medical
2 expenditures attributable to obesity in the United States reached \$75 billion in 2003
3 and that taxpayers financed approximately half of these costs through Medicare and
4 Medicaid; and

5 WHEREAS, In Maryland, over 8%, or \$368 million, of medical expenditures are
6 attributable to obesity in the Medicare population and over 13%, or \$391 million, of
7 medical expenditures in Maryland are attributable to obesity in the Medicaid
8 population; and

9 WHEREAS, It is in the best interests of the residents of the State to continue to
10 implement effective existing methods of treatment and prevention of adult and
11 childhood obesity and to reduce the potential for other serious medical conditions
12 caused or exacerbated by obesity; and

13 WHEREAS, Education, prevention, and proper treatment of obesity can reduce
14 health care costs and improve the quality of life for a significant number of adults and
15 children in Maryland; now, therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the
17 General Assembly acknowledges obesity as a growing epidemic, and urges
18 communities, businesses, and schools throughout the State to develop awareness
19 campaigns and voluntary programs appropriate to their settings that focus on the
20 causes of and prevention of obesity, the symptoms and long-term consequences
21 associated with obesity, and the healthy alternatives for food choices and appropriate
22 programs of physical fitness that lead to control of weight and improved lifestyle; and
23 be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly further encourages the expansion of
25 physical education in schools, the creation of obesity prevention programs for the
26 whole family, and the inclusion of obesity prevention in medical school curricula; and
27 be it further

28 RESOLVED, That the month of November is declared Obesity Awareness Month
29 in Maryland; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
31 Legislative Services to the Honorable Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Governor of Maryland;
32 the Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; and
33 the Honorable Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates.