



May 28, 2024

The Honorable Kat Cammack
United States House of Representatives
Bipartisan Women's Caucus
2421 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
United States

The Honorable Susie Lee
United States House of Representatives
Bipartisan Women's Caucus
365 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515
United States

A Call to Action to Women in Congress: Prioritize Obesity as a Women's Health Issue

Dear Representatives Cammack and Lee,

As leaders working to improve the lives and health of women, we are deeply grateful for your unwavering commitment to advancing policy change to support the well-being of women across the nation.

As you may know, there is a critical nexus between obesity and women's health. Women carry an undue burden when it comes to obesity:

- [1 in 3 American women are impacted by the disease](#), including [57% of Black women and 44% of Hispanic women](#).
- The disease is also associated with over [200 other health complications](#), including many that specifically affect women throughout their lives, such as [breast and ovarian cancers](#) as well as [fertility and maternal health challenges](#).
- Women with obesity are also more likely to face harmful social stigma and discrimination. For example, women affected by obesity [earn less money](#) and are [less likely to get promoted](#) at work than their colleagues who do not have obesity.

Although obesity is recognized by experts as a chronic disease with serious health consequences, Medicare does not cover medications when used to address obesity. Ensuring that Medicare beneficiaries have access to the full range of evidence-based options for treating this disease is a matter of fairness. We wouldn't allow Medicare to place this type of restriction on care for other chronic diseases like cancer or heart disease. So why are we letting this happen for obesity?

For these reasons, we implore you, as women lawmakers with a profound understanding of the complexities surrounding women's health and fairness, to stand up for women living with obesity and rally behind [HR.4818/S.2407](#), the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (TROA).

Passing TROA would ensure Medicare beneficiaries are able to access comprehensive obesity care by expanding the type of healthcare professionals who can deliver intensive behavioral therapy under Medicare Part B and providing Medicare Part D coverage for approved obesity medications. Together, these steps would undoubtedly ease the pervasive impact of obesity among older Americans, particularly women.

This is a critical moment to improve the health of women in our families and communities—our mothers, sisters and daughters alike. If we hope to make progress in women's health, we must forge a path toward a nation where every woman can thrive, unencumbered by the physical and mental burdens of obesity. In the pursuit of a healthier, more equitable future for all women, we urge your support for the passage of TROA.

With deepest appreciation for your steadfast dedication to women's health and well-being, we look forward to working with you to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Women's Health & Prevention (AWHP)
Alliance for Aging Research (AAR)
Alliance for Patient Access (AfPA)
American Diabetes Association (ADA)
American Kidney Fund
American Medical Women's Association (AMWA)
American Psychological Association Services (APA)
American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS)
Black Women's Health Imperative (BWHI)
DiabetesSisters
Gerontological Society of America (GSA)
Global Liver Institute (GLI)
HealthyWomen
National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN)
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH)
National Caucus and Center on Black Aging (NCBA)
National Consumers League (NCL)
National Medical Association (NMA)
National Council on Aging (NCOA)
Obesity Action Coalition (OAC)
Obesity Care Advocacy Network (OCAN)
Obesity Medicine Association (OMA)
WomenHeart

Cc: Members of the Bipartisan Women's Caucus