

## **Obesity Background Information**

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### **Why Reducing and Preventing Obesity is Important**

- Health is the foundation for Michigan's economic transformation and overall quality of life.
- We must become a healthier Michigan if we are to become a stronger Michigan. Good health and wellness improves the lives of Michiganders, and reduces health care costs to taxpayers and job providers.
- Obesity is a major public health problem nationally and in Michigan. It is a key contributor to other ailments such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer, stroke and dementia.
- The increasing cost of health care is one of the most significant economic challenges facing our state and nation. These costs impact employees, job providers and all taxpayers.
- Social stigmatization and discrimination in employment and academic situations decreases the likelihood that a person will make individual behavior decisions that promote a healthy lifestyle.
- There are already programs in place to prevent and reduce obesity but government cannot move the needle alone. People need to make personal decisions that will change their lifestyles in order for the prevalence of obesity in Michigan to decline.

## **Health Costs**

- Obesity contributes to major chronic conditions such as heart disease, hypertension, stroke, type 2 diabetes, asthma, breast and colon cancer, arthritis and depression.
- Hispanics and African-Americans have a higher prevalence of obesity.
- Individuals with a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or greater are considered obese.
- Weight and height are used to calculate BMI, which provides a reasonable indicator of body fat and weight categories that may lead to health issues.
- In 2010, 31.7 percent of Michigan adults were considered obese and 35.1 percent were considered overweight. Two-thirds of Michigan's adult population is at an unhealthy weight.
- Currently in Michigan, some 800,000 children and 5 million adults have a weight problem.
- Childhood obesity is significantly under-diagnosed, and of special concern is the 12.4 percent of Michigan youths who are obese.
- Nationally, approximately 60 million adults are obese.
- Three out of every 10 Michigan adults were obese in 2009.

## **Economic Costs**

- In 2008, Michigan spent an estimated \$3.1 billion in obesity related medical costs.
- It's projected Michigan will spend \$12.5 billion in obesity related medical costs in 2018 if rates continue to increase at their current levels.

## **Obesity Summit**

- Stakeholders from across Michigan will participate in workgroups the day of the summit to create recommendations on strategies that Michigan should utilize to prevent and reduce obesity.
- The recommendations from the summit will be used to craft a work plan which the state will implement to start “moving the needle” and reduce obesity in Michigan.
- The stakeholders were brought in based on those who care about and work on preventing and reducing obesity.
- It is the hope that by bringing attention to this issue we can mobilize organizations and individuals to create their own plan to reduce and prevent obesity in their lives and their communities.
- The state cannot move the needle on obesity on its own. This summit is the starting point for getting Michiganders to work together at creating a healthier Michigan.