



# Impacting the Obesity Epidemic in Louisiana

## What's on the Books At the start of the 2010 Legislative Session

### Legislation to Impact Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity

#### 2009 Regular Session

Act No. 147 Provides for *bicyclists and vehicle safety*.

Act No. 252 *Healthy Food Retail Act* to stimulate investment in healthy food retail outlets in underserved areas. Program created in the Department of Agriculture and Forestry and currently not funded.

Act No. 256 Provides for *health-related fitness assessments* to determine physical fitness levels of students in schools. Review of current pilot program using Fitnessgram with intent to expand statewide.

Act No. 286 Requires *physical activity* for students (K-8, at least 30 minutes per day) and establishment of *School Health Advisory Councils* in each city, parish and other local public school board.

Act No. 306 Amended 2005 Act 331 *School Vending Bill* to provide that 100% (previously 50%) of beverages sold on high school campuses adhere to healthy guidelines.

SCR 77 DHH & DOE to examine the adequacy of current practices for ensuring *preventative health* and well-being of adolescents in Louisiana

SCR 110 Created the *Complete Streets Workgroup* in the Department of Transportation & Development.

#### 2007 Regular Session

Act 180 Requires the Department of Education to hire a *Health and Physical Education Coordinator* who will be responsible for the development, implementation, and monitoring of health and physical education curricula in all public elementary and secondary schools in the state.

#### 2005 Regular Session

Act 331 Requires public schools to provide *healthy choices in school vending machines*. *All* food and beverage items sold on campus in elementary and secondary schools, and at least 50% of items offered in high schools, must adhere to healthy guidelines.

#### 2004 Regular Session

Act 734 *Physical fitness and nutrition* of students. Establishment and implementation of a pilot program and School Health Awards for outstanding program of physical activity. Public schools, grades K-6, provide 30 minutes each school day of quality, moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**The Louisiana Council on Obesity Prevention & Management was created by state legislation in 1999. The Council supports the development, implementation, and monitoring of policies to respond to the public health challenge of childhood and adult obesity.**

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## Priority Areas for Policy Intervention, 2010

### IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING OF EXISTING POLICIES

- Support strong school-level implementation of state nutrition and physical activity policies – including adherence to healthy guidelines for food and beverage items sold on campus, provision of at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day for K-8 students, and development of *School Health Advisory Councils* – and of the federal requirement that all school districts with a federally-funded school meals program establish a *local School Wellness Policy*.
- Support state Complete Streets policy as recommended by the *Complete Streets Workgroup*, so that streets are designed to be safe and convenient for travel by auto, foot, bicycle and transit.
- Fund the *Healthy Food Retail Act* financing program to incentivize supermarkets and other healthy food outlets to locate in underserved areas, or fund projects that meet these goals.
- Support collection and reporting on height/weight data for children and the expansion of health-related physical fitness assessments in schools from a pilot program to statewide. Parish level data on childhood obesity are needed to inform evidence-based practices and policy.

### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGIES

- Increase Opportunities for Extracurricular Physical Activity
- Improve Access to Outdoor Recreational Facilities
- Enhance Infrastructure Supporting Bicycling and Walking , Improve Access to Public Transportation, and Enhance Personal and Traffic Safety in Areas Where Persons Are or Could be Physically Active

### HEALTHY EATING STRATEGIES

- Increase Availability of Healthier (and Affordable) Food and Beverage Choices in Schools and Public Service Venues
- Restrict Availability of Less Healthy Foods and Beverages in Schools and Public Service Venues
- Support Farm-to-School Policies, Farmers Markets and Community Gardens
- Improve Availability of Mechanisms for Purchasing and Provide Incentives for the Production, Distribution, and Procurement of Foods from Farms
- Limit Advertisements of Less Healthy Foods and Beverages
- Encourage Menu Labeling at Chain Restaurants

### OTHER

- Promote and Increase Support for Breastfeeding
- Medicaid Coverage for Childhood Obesity Diagnosis
- Encourage Worksite Wellness
- Establish State Standards for Healthy Eating and Activity in Childcare and After-School Programs, including Limiting Screen Time

**\*Note: This list reflects evidence-based recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Institute of Medicine, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.**

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