

AN ACT concerning public health.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Obesity Prevention Initiative Act.

Section 5. Legislative findings. The General Assembly makes all of the following findings:

(1) Nearly 25% of Illinois adults are obese and 37% are overweight, 62% of Illinois adults in total.

(2) The percentage of normal-weight Illinois adults has steadily decreased as the percentage who are overweight or obese has steadily increased.

(3) More than 31% of Illinois children ages 10 through 17 years are considered overweight or obese.

(4) A majority (56%) of publicly insured children are overweight or obese (the highest state prevalence in the nation) and nearly 2 in 5 (39%) black, non-Hispanic children are overweight or obese (the third highest state prevalence).

(5) Today's overweight and obese children are likely to become tomorrow's overweight and health-impaired adults, at risk for premature death.

(6) Being overweight and obese puts people at increased

risk for coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, hypertension, dyslipidemia (high cholesterol or triglycerides or both), stroke, liver and gallbladder disease, sleep apnea and respiratory problems, osteoarthritis, and gynecological problems.

(7) Overweight and obesity-related diseases cause premature death.

(8) The economic costs associated with treating these diseases is substantial and increasing, accounting for more than 9% of total health care costs, approximately half of which are born by public resources via Medicare and Medicaid and the majority of the remainder born by employers.

(9) Obese people suffer more injuries and disabilities and have more non-productive work days in total, creating loss of earnings for Illinois employees and loss of productivity for Illinois employers.

(10) Research has shown that 27% of health care charges for adults over age 40 are associated with people being physically inactive, overweight, or obese.

(11) From 1987 to 2001, obesity-related spending accounted for an estimated 27% of the increase in inflation-adjusted per capita health spending.

(12) Research has shown that each additional day of physical activity per week can reduce medical charges by 4.7%.

(13) The non-economic costs of being overweight or obese that is experienced by Illinois citizens are immeasurable in terms of pain, mobility, self-esteem, bias and stigma, the grief associated with the premature death of loved ones, and other quality of life issues.

(14) Food and exercise habits are strongly linked to the food and exercise habits of the communities in which the individuals live, work, attend school, and socialize.

(15) Individual and community food and exercise habits are strongly linked to environmental factors, such as access to healthy food and safe opportunities for physical activity.

(16) Public health interventions focusing on healthy eating, physical activity, and environmental change to facilitate these behaviors have been shown to be successful in reducing obesity and promoting healthy weight and physical activity among children and adults. Communities in Illinois are developing and implementing promising models that should be evaluated and supported.

(17) Obesity is a significant contributing factor to many chronic diseases faced by Illinois residents and that obesity and its effects on human health are best addressed in an evidence-based, holistic manner, including policy change, environmental change, and community public health and wellness efforts.

(18) The General Assembly has recognized the

importance of studying obesity and passed the Obesity Study and Prevention Fund Act in 2004. The Illinois State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) identified obesity and physical activity as strategic priority health conditions that demand action, including without limitation the following:

(A) Increased efforts to educate the public on the health risks associated with obesity and poor nutrition, effective methods for improving nutrition and physical activity, and resources to help individuals to adopt healthy lifestyles.

(B) Promoting changes in State and local policies designed to support healthy eating and physical activity, including improving community access to healthy food and safe opportunities for physical activity.

Section 10. Obesity Prevention Initiative. Within 60 days after the effective date of this Act, and subject to the availability of public, private, and contributed in-kind resources, the Department of Public Health shall work with the Department of Human Services and other public, private, and voluntary stakeholders to plan, organize, and publicize at least 3 hearings on the health and social costs of obesity and the need to address the obesity epidemic with community, policy, and individual health behavior change. The purpose of these hearings shall be to (1) highlight existing State and

community level initiatives, (2) identify existing plans and opportunities for action and the expansion of initiatives, (3) inform policy makers and the public about effective solutions to the problem, and (4) identify and engage stakeholders to promote action to reduce obesity, improve nutrition, and increase physical activity. The hearing officers shall include: the Chair of the State Board of Health or her designee and up to 3 additional members of the State Board of Health; the Chair of the Chronic Disease Task Force, if appointed, and up to 3 additional members of the Chronic Disease Task Force, if appointed; 2 members of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be named by the Speaker of the House and one of whom shall be named by the Minority Leader of the House; and 2 members of the Senate, one of whom shall be named by the President of the Senate and one of whom shall be named by the Minority Leader of the Senate. The Department shall provide or work with stakeholders to provide logistical and support staff for hearings.

No later than February 1, 2010, and subject to the availability of public, private, and contributed in-kind resources, a report on these hearings shall be provided to the members of the General Assembly and the State Board of Health to inform and support action on implementing the 2009 State Health Improvement Plan. Pursuant to Public Act 95-0900, the Chronic Disease Task Force shall also use the report to inform the Plan that is due July 1, 2010 to the General Assembly.

Within 60 days after the completion of the report on the hearings, but no later than April 1, 2010, and subject to appropriation for that purpose, the Department of Public Health shall grant funds to one or more non-profit organizations or local public health departments to conduct a statewide education and engagement campaign focusing on the health effects of obesity, the social costs of obesity, and the need to address the obesity epidemic with community, policy, and individual health behavior change.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.