



September 16th, 2024

Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Rodgers, Ranking Member Pallone, and Members of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce,

As the CEO of the Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention (AWHP)—an organization focused on ensuring accessible, affordable, and equitable preventive healthcare for all women and girls—I am writing to request your support for expanding access to obesity care by prioritizing the passage of the amended version of the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (H.R. 4818), also known as TROA, which previously passed out of the House Committee on Ways and Means.

Obesity is a chronic disease with a significant impact on women, including those on Medicare. **More than [3 in 10 women](#) nationwide are affected by obesity and the disease has a [disproportionate impact](#) on women of color.** It is associated with over **200 other chronic conditions**, including many that specifically affect women throughout their lives, such as breast and ovarian cancers as well as fertility issues. What's more, **obesity also has a tremendous economic burden**, with economic costs (both direct and indirect) totaling [\\$1.72 trillion in 2018](#).

Given obesity's extensive impact, **AWHP believes that insurance coverage for the full scope of obesity care options is critical to improving women's health.** Evidence-based obesity care includes counseling or intensive behavioral therapy, behavior modification, obesity medications, weight loss surgeries, and nutrition services. The passage of the recently amended version of TROA would be an important step towards expanding access to behavioral support and pharmacotherapeutics for many Medicare beneficiaries. We hope to continue working with policymakers on both sides of the aisle to build upon the amended version and one day ensure that all Medicare beneficiaries have coverage for obesity care.

Continued lack of obesity care coverage by the Medicare program will exacerbate health inequities for older women and communities of color. **As such, AWHP strongly urges this Committee to take action to ensure equitable access to obesity care for older Americans.** We are grateful for the Committee's attention to this important issue.

Respectfully,

Millicent Gorham, CEO
Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention