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# ASMBS Activity Report

July 2014

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## HEADLINES:

OCC Roll Call Advertisement

Johnson Blumenauer Letter

TROA Update

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## OCC Roll Call Ad Highlights new AMA Policy

On July 29 and 30, 2014, the Obesity Care Continuum (OCC) ran a full page color ad in the Capitol Hill newspaper Roll Call to highlight the new AMA HOD policy – “supporting patient access to the full continuum of care of evidence-based obesity treatment modalities such as behavioral, pharmaceutical, psychosocial, nutritional, and surgical interventions.”

ASMBS provided all the funding for the Roll Call ad and worked closely with industry partners – particularly Covidien and Ethicon – on advocacy efforts surrounding the ad

The following organizations signed on the ad:

American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists

American College of Osteopathic Surgeons

American College of Surgeons

American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics  
American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery  
American Society of Bariatric Physicians  
American Society of Breast Surgeons  
American Society of Plastic Surgeons  
American Urological Association  
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
Obesity Action Coalition  
Society for Vascular Surgery  
Endocrine Society  
The Obesity Society  
The Osteoarthritis Action Alliance

## Johnson/Blumenauer Obesity Letter

In late July, Representatives Johnson (D-TX) and Blumenauer (D-OR) circulated a Dear Colleague and sign-on letter to Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Burwell to all House members.

This letter urges HHS to utilize the same strategy recently employed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) with health insurers that provide care through Multi-State Health Plans (MSHPs) and the Federal Employee Health Benefit (FEHB) Program. OPM recently issued guidance encouraging MSHP and FEHB plans to provide full coverage of obesity treatments. OPM also stated that the agency would no longer tolerate plans excluding obesity treatment coverage on the basis that obesity is a "lifestyle" condition but obesity is instead an AMA recognized disease.

At the time of this report, the following House members had agreed to sign the Johnson/Blumenauer letter:

Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-Guam)  
Corrine Brown (D-FL)  
Tony Cardenas (D-CA)  
Yvette Clark (D-NY)  
Jim Costa (D-CA)  
Al Green (D-TX)  
Hank Johnson (D-GA)  
Barbara Lee (D-CA)  
Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)  
Jim McGovern (D-MA)  
Jim Moran (D-VA)  
Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC)  
Charles Rangel (D-NY)  
Bobby L. Rush (D-IL)  
Paul D. Tonko (D-NY)  
Maxine Waters (D-CA)

## Update on Treat and Reduce Obesity Act

At the time of this report, the TROA had 5 cosponsors in the Senate (Murkowski, Begich, Coons, Hagan and Kirk) and 110 cosponsors in the House. Related to the TROA, cosponsors of the Senate version are developing a “Dear Colleague” letter to HHS – urging the Department to utilize its administrative authority to include coverage of FDA-approved obesity drugs under Medicare Part D. OAC is working with Senator Carper’s office to expand the language to include intensive behavioral therapy as well.