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April 29, 2003

To the Members of the Committee on Legislative Affairs and Operations:

Re: S.C.R. 13

Over 500,000 people die from cancer in the United States every year. Poor nutrition and physical inactivity are a leading cause of cancer death and are linked to approximately one-third of cancer deaths. Unhealthy eating habits and physical inactivity cause at least 300,000 preventable deaths each year from cancer, heart disease and diabetes.

Increasing evidence indicates the important role that maintaining a healthy weight plays in reducing cancer risk. However, the number of overweight and obese individuals is increasing nationwide – in both men and women and people of all ages, races and educational backgrounds. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, almost 61% of adults are so overweight that it poses a risk to their health. Perhaps more troubling is the increasing trend in overweight and obese children and adolescents. Overweight and obesity rates in children have doubled over the last two decades; 14% of children and 12% of teens are obese.

S.C.R. 13 is an important bill not only to the American Cancer Society, but to me personally. I nearly lost my father this past year due to weight complicated health problems. He used to have a sign that every visitor to his home saw upon immediately entering that read: "I am in shape. Round is a shape." He was diagnosed with Type II diabetes last November was told by his physician that unless he lost weight, he would dead within a year. Fortunately, my father decided that his health and his life were more important than fat and sugar, and has lost over 60 pounds and still counting and is proud that he is now no longer classified as "obese", but merely "overweight" and his blood sugar is now within a normal range.

S.C.R. 13 would not only establish a study of the impacts of obesity on our state, but would also create public education opportunities and avenues for public and private resources to work together to combat the impacts of obesity. The American Cancer Society is committed to assist with this vital task.

On behalf of the American Cancer Society and our 6,000 state wide volunteers, we ask you to support and pass S.C.R. 13.

Sincerely,

Buffy Gail Martin
Buffy Gail Martin

Government Relations Director - Nevada