

and obesity are now found in Americans of every age, race, and major demographic group, and threaten the health of Americans like no other single disease or condition. In fact, the key to eliminating many of the most serious health conditions is not only to reduce overweight and obesity but also to encourage exercise of all kinds. On National Dance Day across the nation, Americans will be dancing, one of the most enjoyable and popular forms of exercise.

This bill would provide \$25 million to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for a coordinated national effort to reverse increasingly sedentary lifestyles and diets that are high in fat and sugar.

We see rising consciousness of the need to get moving, from the First Lady's "Let's Move" campaign for children and the television shows "So You Think You Can Dance," "The Biggest Loser," and "Extreme Weight Loss". Yet, the United States continues to have startling rates of obesity among adults and children. In 2010, estimates from the CDC National Center for Health Statistics showed that since 1980, the percentage of children who are overweight has more than doubled, and the percentage of adolescents who are overweight has tripled. Today, the 13 million overweight children have an 80 percent chance of being overweight adults, with the health conditions that follow, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, and cancer. The CDC reports that Type 2 diabetes, considered an adult disease, is now widespread in children. The rising cost of the health care system, including insurance premiums, reflects the epidemic. The consequences for kids will follow them throughout their lives if we do not act quickly and decisively. If we are serious about controlling health care costs, we must start where the most serious health conditions begin: overweight and obesity.

This bill seeks to provide the first national strategy to combat the epidemic by directing the CDC to do three things: train health professionals to recognize the signs of obesity early and to educate people concerning healthy lifestyles, such as proper nutrition and regular exercise; conduct public education campaigns about how to recognize and address overweight and obesity; and develop intervention strategies to be used in everyday life, such as in the workplace and in community settings. This legislation is the minimum necessary to address our most important health crisis. Today, chronic diseases, many of which are caused or exacerbated by overweight and obesity, account for 70 percent of all deaths in the U.S., and 60 percent of U.S. medical care costs. According to the Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity, the cost of obesity in the U.S. was more than \$117 billion in 2000. The CDC has highlighted a study that estimates the annual cost to be \$147 billion. It is estimated that between 300,000 and 400,000 deaths per year are related to obesity.

A focused national health initiative would provide guidance to the states to engage in similar programs, as mayors of some cities have done. National focus could lead to full participation in high school physical education classes, participation in which has dropped from 42 percent in 1991 to 33 percent in 2005. Changes in nutrition are equally critical because 60 percent of young people consume

too much fat, a factor in the doubling of the percentage of overweight youth. Data show an increase in unhealthy eating habits for adults and no change in physical activity.

According to a recent study conducted by the American College of Sports Medicine, the District of Columbia is the fittest city in the United States, and yet, obesity continues to be a severe problem even here. Most of the obesity epidemic is exercise-food-related. One-fifth of the District of Columbia is considered to be obese, and if the number is this high in the nation's capital, one shudders to think how high it is for other areas of the nation. We need to act now.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important legislation to mobilize the country now, before entirely preventable health conditions, which often begin in childhood, overwhelm the nation's health care system.

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HONORING THE THOMPSON-  
CLEMONS POST #200

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 23, 2015*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor The Thompson-Clemons Post #200 of Greenwood, Mississippi.

The Thompson-Clemons Post #200 of Greenwood, Mississippi was the first African American Post established in the State of Mississippi and came about due to the perseverance of eighteen determined Black Veterans of World War I and World War II in the Mississippi Delta.

These veterans attempted to join Keesler-Hamrick-Gillespie Post #29 which refused them membership. Given that this was the 1940s and Mississippi being a segregationist state, Post #29 could not get a majority vote of its members to allow black veterans to join their post.

The eighteen black veterans filed a petition to start a new post and presented it to the Mississippi Department of the American Legion. Mr. Solomon N. Dickerson, a black veteran, postal worker and co-worker of Mr. Author H. Ritcher, the Adjutant of post #29, worked to get the petition through the District. It was due to their vigorous and persistent correspondence to the District and the Mississippi Department of the American Legion that they were allowed to form a separate post if they could find a sponsor.

Keesler-Hamrick-Gillespie Post #29 agreed to serve as a sponsor to assist Thompson-Clemons Post #200 in getting the temporary charter, paving the way for other charters to be granted to other black veteran's groups throughout the state of Mississippi.

Originally, the post was called the Mississippi Delta Post #200. Mr. L.H. Threadgill, principal of Stone Street High School, a veteran of World War II, proposed that the post be named after two former students of Stone Street High School, that were killed in action during WWII. The motion carried and the name was adopted. Thompson-Clemons Post #200 was granted a permanent charter on July 28, 1949, becoming the first Black post in the State of Mississippi. The first Post Commander was Mr. Solomon N. Dickerson.

Mr. L.H. Threadgill and others in the community were instrumental in purchasing the property, obtaining a deed, and getting a building to establish a post headquarters where it is still located today.

The Thompson-Clemons Post #200 of Greenwood, Mississippi has a distinct track record of encouragement to veterans with issues, be they from serving abroad; in combat situations or statewide service. Issues range from transportation to Regional Office and VA Hospital for medical disability claims, educational and skill training, housing and other activities including establishing collaborative partnerships with community organizations to provide emergency services such as utilities, homes for the homeless, counseling and assistance in understanding the myriad of services provided by the VA.

The VA community activities include sponsorship of little league baseball teams, voter education classes, veterans day celebration, adopt a school program, donations to needy families, Boys State Program and the National American Legion Oratorical Contest, where candidates sponsored by Post #200, have won the Mississippi State Championship four times, and three out of the past four years.

Leadership activities include a weekly live call in radio talk program aired on WGML 104.3 FM in Greenwood, Mississippi where veterans can actually dial up and talk about issues that affect them and their community. Partnering with organizations such as the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Greenwood Voters League, Mississippi Valley State University and other community based groups that advocate for social justice.

Thompson-Clemons Post #200 is well integrated into the fabric and culture of the Mississippi Delta and should be recognized as a Post that has the interest of our service men, their families and community at heart.

The American Legion Post #200 is moving forward to continue the legacy of those early veterans who honorably served their country and had the vision that through the American Legion and its core principles, they could continue to protect and build an America and Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a remarkable organization, The Thompson-Clemons Post #200, for its dedication to serving our veterans and giving back to the African American community.

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CONGRATULATING DR. JAMES  
COFER ON HIS FULBRIGHT  
SCHOLAR ACHIEVEMENT

**HON. BILLY LONG**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 23, 2015*

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Dr. James Cofer on receiving a renowned Fulbright Scholar award.

Dr. Cofer, a Springfield resident and former Missouri State University president, was awarded a Fulbright Scholar grant to lecture and perform research at Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil. As a Missouri State University marketing professor, Dr. Cofer devoted his research efforts while in Brazil to studying college and university administration and developing models for the Brazilian higher education community.