§ 261. Legislative intent. The legislature hereby finds, determines, and declares that obesity is a serious medical problem affecting up to one-third of all Americans. In addition, a nineteen ninety-seven Kaiser Permanente study concluded that there is a significant potential for a reduction in health care expenditures through obesity prevention. In addition:

1. Obesity is known to cause or exacerbate a number of serious disorders including hypertension, dyslipidemia, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, respiratory dysfunction, gout, and osteoarthritis;

2. Nearly eighty percent of patients with diabetes mellitus are obese;

3. Nearly seventy percent of diagnosed cases of cardiovascular disease are related to obesity; and

4. Obesity ranks second only to smoking as a preventable cause of death, with some three hundred thousand deaths annually attributable to obesity.