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## **New York State Must Enact Comprehensive Health Insurance Coverage for Obesity Treatment**

February 7, 2025

Tri-state Obesity Society strongly supports legislation (S3104, Cooney/ A4211, Reyes) to require comprehensive health insurance coverage for obesity treatment by both state-regulated commercial and Medicaid insurance.

On behalf of our healthcare professionals who treat hundreds of patients everyday, we implore New York State to expand access to these medications to New York State residents. Comprehensive obesity management that includes lifestyle therapy, medications, and surgery is essential to managing obesity, improving patients' quality of life, and reducing the long-term healthcare burden.

Our patients tell us that these medications are not "game changers" but "life-changers." The health benefits of GLP-1 medications are proven through large research studies and decades of clinical experience, but their life-changing benefits are most pronounced through patients' voices:

*"I've traveled to four different countries in the past year, and I no longer have to request for the seat belt extender."*

*"I danced for 10 hours last month at a dance-a-thon. My knees have never been happier."*

*"I can go up the subway stairs now without having to pause on the middle landing."*

*"I can keep up with my grandchild, and he's a toddler!"*

*"The food noise is gone. Just, gone. I can focus again on everything else now without having to constantly worry about what I'm going to eat or whether it's going to increase my weight."*

Increasing access to GLP-1 medications for patients with obesity is crucial in addressing a growing public health challenge. These treatments are proven to improve health and prevent illness by causing weight loss, reducing blood sugar, decreasing high blood pressure, lowering cholesterol, treating obstructive sleep apnea, and improving osteoarthritis. Obesity is a complex condition that affects millions of Americans who deserve access to comprehensive weight management and healthcare.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beverly Tchang". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Beverly" and last name "Tchang" clearly distinguishable.

Beverly Tchang  
President of Tri-state Obesity Society  
[btchang@tristateobesitysociety.org](mailto:btchang@tristateobesitysociety.org)