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Exhibit I

**Division of Medical Nutrition and
Center for Nutrition and Metabolic Disorders**

March 19, 2004

To: Senator Valerie Wiener, Chairperson
Legislative Committee on Health Care's Subcommittee to Study Medical and Societal Costs and
Impacts of Obesity

From: Sachiko T. St. Jeor, Ph.D., R.D., Professor and Chief 

Re: Recommendation to Establish a Planning Group on Obesity Prevention and Treatment

I am in full support of the recommendation that a Planning Group on Obesity Prevention and Treatment be established in the Health Division, Department of Human Resources. This concept has been evolving as we have been working toward addressing the need for statewide initiatives, policies and collaborative efforts within the state to better address the problem of overweight and obesity in Nevadans.

New opportunities for research, education, treatment and prevention of obesity are arising with priorities being established nationwide (NIH, USDA, FDA, as well as CDC, etc.). Nevada is not among the 20 state programs funded by the CDC's State-based Nutrition and Physical Activity Program to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases. However, Nevada has many strong programs, resources and professionals who should be involved at the community, state and/or national level. Additionally, there are many opportunities to address obesity within the context of other chronic diseases (diabetes, arthritis, etc.). Thus, we should position ourselves to be competitive to bring extramural support to the State as well as cooperatively implement programs to help reduce the number of Nevada citizens who are overweight or obese through improved nutrition and increased physical activity.

Included in the duties for the Planning Group on Obesity Prevention and Treatment is the recommendation for the consideration of a Center for Obesity Research Education and Treatment that could serve as a statewide resource to coordinate and stimulate interdisciplinary efforts needed to better understand and address the societal and biomedical costs of overweight and obesity in Nevadans. Support for this concept emanating from our established Center for Nutrition and Metabolic Disorders is also attached.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cc: Catherine J. Goring, M.D., Chair, Department of Internal Medicine, UNSOM
Stephen C. McFarlane, Ph.D., Dean, UNSOM
John H. Frederick, Ph.D., Executive Vice President and Provost, UNR
John M. Lilley, D.M.A., President, UNR
Jane A. Nichols, Ed.D., Chancellor, UCCSN

EXHIBIT <u>I</u> Obesity	Document consists of <u>3</u> pages
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entire document provided.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Due to size limitations, pages ____ through ____ provided.	
A copy of the complete document is available through the Research Library (775-684-6827 or e-mail library@lcb.state.nv.us)	
Meeting Date <u>3-22-04</u>	

March 18, 2004



UNIVERSITY
OF NEVADA
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Office of Senior Associate Dean
for Basic Science & Research
Savitt Medical Building/338
Reno, Nevada 89557-0161

To: Members of the Legislative Committee on Health Care Subcommittee to
Study Medical and Societal Costs and Impact of Obesity

From: David M. Lupan, Ph.D. *DL*
Senior Associate Dean for Research

Re: Support for the Center of Obesity Research, Education and Treatment

The epidemic of obesity has created unparalleled opportunities for interdisciplinary education and medical research to address societal need, health care costs, health implications, co-morbidities, e.g. heart disease, associated with this disease, therapeutic approaches to treatment and promising approaches to prevention. For these reasons, our Center for Nutrition and Metabolic Disorders (CNMD) was created to serve as a "demonstration clinic" where state-of-the-art treatment and research opportunities could be implemented to advance medical knowledge and create opportunities for interaction of an interdisciplinary team of health care providers. This team, headed by Dr Sachiko St. Jeor - a member of the School of Medicine's faculty and a nationally and internationally recognized expert in obesity and heart disease, is currently housed in the Division of Medical Nutrition, Department of Internal Medicine. The CNMD is staffed by 2 physicians, 5 registered dietitians with different specialties, and 2 behavioral specialists. It also interacts with 5 national experts in the areas of exercise physiology, behavior modification, medical management of obesity, biostatistics, and physician-based practices.

The CNMD and the Division of Medical Nutrition have successfully obtained extramural research support and are currently recognized by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as one of the 21 Nutrition Academic Awardees for its Medical School Nutrition Curriculum, which is a statewide program with faculty both in Las Vegas and Reno. The CNMD is currently funded by various extramural funds and serves as a site for faculty development, and medical student and resident education. A small grant from the State Health Division created an important partnership in the development of a Diabetes and Obesity Treatment Module where a physician extension model was developed to help better address obesity in diabetes management in physician's offices. The RENO Diet Heart Study (a clinical study of heart disease that was funded by NHLBI - NIH) also set precedent for the development of assessment tools and interdisciplinary management of obesity as evidenced by collaboration with over 50 local and national health care professionals, 8 major universities, and the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

The CNMD specializes in weight management and offers a range of treatments from basic lifestyle changes through nutrition and physical activity to medical and surgical

management. In its role as a demonstration clinic, the CNMD is ideally suited for pursuing future grants, particularly from the CDC Obesity State Programs and IMPACT legislation when successfully enacted. Through the CNMD clinic and Dr. St Jeor's connections with directors of other Obesity Centers and national agencies with regard to weight management and obesity studies, a program, or whatever it may be named, for obesity study can and should be developed and will be successful.

The administration of the School of Medicine supports statewide initiatives and directions in the planning for coping with obesity, as it is a leading health care dilemma for the residents of Nevada. On behalf of the University of Nevada School of Medicine, I whole heartedly endorse Dr. St Jeor and the Center for Nutrition and Metabolic Disorders in our Division of Medical Nutrition, Department of Internal Medicine for programmatic leadership of any Center for Obesity Research, Education and Treatment that may be contemplated. I believe the School of Medicine is well-positioned with its clinical expertise in nutrition and obesity to lead the State in this endeavor because of its statewide presence and our network of health care providers in both Las Vegas and Reno.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Cc: Catherine J. Goring, M.D., Chair, Department of Internal Medicine, UNSOM
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