Over 2000 years ago, Hippocrates said, “Persons who are naturally fat are apt to die earlier than those who are slender.” Modern evidence suggests this observation is true. Obesity is directly associated with 300,000 deaths each year and may soon cause more preventable disease and death than cigarette smoking. Obesity causes many adverse health conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. Due to the effects of obesity on public health, human longevity is expected to shorten in the US during the 21st century.

The prevalence of obesity is rapidly and steadily increasing. 64% of all adults are overweight, while over a third are obese and 5% are morbidly obese. Obesity causes more deaths each year than AIDS, breast cancer and motor vehicle accidents combined. Additionally, obesity consumes 9.1% of all health care expenditures annually or approximately $178 billion. Obesity prevention and education has the potential to positively affect health care and will help to control health care costs.

Public health law has become the most powerful tool to affect healthcare. This brief will present an innovative and comprehensive public health proposal that has the potential to improve the health of our citizens. The intent of the Obesity Prevention and Public Education program (OPPE) is to promote and maintain a healthy weight for Americans. The proposal includes education, incentives, public awareness, and re-branding campaigns.