WASHINGTON (January 18, 2013) – Weight Watchers International, Inc. and the United States Conference of Mayors announced a new initiative to help curb the national obesity epidemic and foster healthy lifestyles in communities, especially low-income areas that have higher obesity rates and increased risks for obesity1, at the U.S. Conference of Mayors 81st Winter Meeting. The Healthy Communities Grant Program is a pilot initiative designed to recognize and assist three cities that have existing healthy lifestyle programming to help them build upon successful strategies for healthy eating, physical activity, and weight loss and management. The effort leverages the notion that mayors learn best from each other and that sharing best practices can promote innovative solutions for healthier living. The grant program capitalizes on a collaborative approach to creating healthier environments by establishing health-focused relationships between community members, governments, and businesses.

“If we do nothing, by 2030, estimates predict roughly half of all U.S. men and women will be obese2. We need to act now with solutions that are proven to be effective,” said David Kirchhoff, Weight Watchers CEO. “Collaborating with the U.S. Conference of Mayors on this initiative is part of our commitment to form unique relationships with mayors to tackle obesity with community-based solutions. Through this effort, we can provide Weight Watchers’ proven approach to weight loss to individuals who otherwise would not be able to afford our program.”

The Healthy Communities Grant Program will enable three selected cities to build upon their existing healthy lifestyle-related programming by receiving steeply discounted Weight Watchers memberships for local residents who qualify based on health status and financial need. The total retail value of all memberships offered is up to $1 million. Each city also will receive a $25,000 grant to administer their program and build capacity to help ensure its success.*

“The U.S. Conference of Mayors has long been committed to mayoral-driven health promotion in communities nationwide,” said U.S. Conference of Mayors President Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter. “We are proud to work with Weight Watchers on this important initiative to help city residents achieve a healthier lifestyle.”
To launch the new initiative, a panel of mayors joined Weight Watchers CEO Kirchhoff to share their innovative health promotion approaches at a plenary lunch at the USCM winter meeting. Panelists described policies and programs that are working to reduce the incidence of weight-related chronic diseases, including heart disease and type 2 diabetes, and are helping to control healthcare costs, increase worker productivity and improve overall quality of life for residents.

Moderated by Maggie Fox, Senior Health Writer for NBCNews.com and TODAY.com, the panel, which included Oklahoma City Mayor Mick Cornett, vice chair of the USCM Standing Committee on Children, Health and Human Services; Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, vice chair of the USCM Food Policy Task Force; Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer; and Asheville, N.C. Mayor Terry Bellamy, underscored how city governments today must juggle many roles from healthcare provider for municipal employees to purveyor of public health for citizens.

Application guidelines, eligibility requirements, and information on availability for the new initiative will be available at usmayors.org/weightwatchers. Applications will be due in early spring.

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**About The United States Conference of Mayors**
The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,295 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. Like us on Facebook at facebook.com/usmayors, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/usmayors.

**About Weight Watchers International, Inc.**
Weight Watchers International, Inc. is the world’s leading provider of weight management services, operating globally through a network of Company-owned and franchise operations. Weight Watchers holds over 45,000 meetings each week where members receive group support and learn about healthy eating patterns, behavior modification and physical activity. WeightWatchers.com provides innovative, subscription weight management products over the Internet and is the leading Internet-based weight management provider in the world. In addition, Weight Watchers offers a wide range of products, publications and programs for those interested in weight loss and weight control.

*Award of grant and steeply discounted Weight Watchers memberships will be subject to eligibility and compliance with local, state and federal laws and regulations, including without limitation any applicable local gift ordinance. Void where prohibited.
