Coalition Aims to Reduce Obesity

By CQ Staff

Retailers, the food and beverage industry and nonprofits launched on Monday the Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation, a partnership aimed at fighting obesity.

Backers said the idea is to help reduce obesity, especially among children, by promoting the idea of balancing calories expended in physical activity with calories consumed in a healthy diet. About $20 million has been committed to the initiative, which will key in on the marketplace, schools and places of employment.

For example, companies may make changes to products, packaging and labeling, such as smaller portions, more complete caloric information and product reforms. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will support an independent evaluation of this initiative, backers said.

Members of the coalition include food giants such as General Mills Inc., Campbell Soup Co., Sara Lee Corp., Kraft Foods and the Coca-Cola Co., as well as nonprofits such as the American Council for Fitness and Nutrition Foundation, the Girl Scouts of the USA and the National Wildlife Federation.