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**REALITY COALITION APPLAUDS FDA FOR
LARGEST RECALL OF TAINTED, UNREGULATED WEIGHT LOSS PILLS**
Group Calls on Consumers to Adopt a More Realistic Approach to Weight Loss

NEW YORK, December 23, 2008 – The Reality Coalition – a group of experts and organizations on overweight and obesity – applauds the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) efforts to recall and warn consumers about dietary supplements that claim to provide weight loss and contain undeclared, active pharmaceutical ingredients.

The FDA’s efforts align with the mission of the Reality Coalition to increase consumer education and understanding of sound weight loss principles and reinforce realistic approaches to weight loss.

“Consumers should avoid dietary weight loss products that pose serious health risks,” said Reality Coalition co-chair George L. Blackburn, MD, Ph.D. “To the best of my knowledge, identifying 25 tainted weight loss products is the largest action by the FDA.”

“We have always argued that weight loss supplements are not effective and unregulated, and now that these products have been shown to contain undeclared ingredients and may endanger health, this action by the FDA is of great urgency,” said Reality Coalition co-chair MRC Greenwood, Ph.D. “Dietary supplements that claim to provide weight loss make false promises, perpetuating the belief that there are quick fixes, which is inaccurate and unsafe. To have a lasting effect, weight loss should be gradual and based on modifications to diet and exercise.”

For more information, visit www.reality-coalition.org.

About Overweight and Obesity

Currently, approximately 65 percent of U.S. adults are overweight or obese, according to the National Institutes of Health. Research suggests that overweight individuals appear to be on the pathway to obesity. Overweight and obesity are associated with an increased risk of developing health problems such as hypertension, type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Factors that can contribute to overweight include an abundance of high-calorie foods, low levels of physical activity, behavior, environment, and genetics. Multiple studies have shown that a modest reduction in weight improves health outcomes significantly in overweight or obese patients.

About the Reality Coalition

The Reality Coalition is a group of esteemed experts and organizations on obesity, nutrition, diabetes and healthcare policy who share the common goal of advancing an agenda for realistic approaches to weight loss to achieve improved public health.

The Reality Initiative was launched in 2006 and is supported by an educational grant from GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare. The Coalition developed a white paper entitled, "Help Not Hype: Getting Real About Weight Loss" (published in *Obesity Management*, February 2007), which was introduced in partnership with the Federal Trade Commission at NAASO, The Obesity Society annual meeting in October 2006. Committed to changing the national weight loss dialogue and broadening its sponsorship base, the Coalition is expanding its efforts in 2009 to invite business leaders, private, public, professional and non-profit groups to partner in our work.

Reality Coalition co-chairs are Louis J. Aronne, MD, Dr. George L. Blackburn, MD, Ph.D, and MRC Greenwood, Ph.D. Reality Coalition members include: Arthur Frank, MD, Obesity Specialist; Gary Foster, Ph.D, Behavioral Psychologist; Barbara Moore, Ph.D, Nutritionist; Judith Stern, Sc.D, Nutritionist; Anne Wolf, MS, RD, Dietitian; Madelyn Fernstrom, Ph.D, CNS, Nutritionist; Johanna Dwyer, Ph.D, Nutritionist; Susan Cummings, RD, Dietitian; Jeremy Nobel, MD, MPH, Public Health Expert; Valentine Burroughs, MD, MBA, Diabetes Expert; Morgan Downey, JD, Obesity Specialist, Shaping America's Health; NAASO, the Obesity Society; National Consumers League; America On the Move; American Dietetic Association; and the American Pharmacists Association.

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