



Speech by

# Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Thursday, 9 March 2006

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Obesity

**Hon. PD BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.57 am): On 28 February I foreshadowed that my government would hold a summit on the problem of obesity. I can announce today that this summit will be held on 3 and 4 May 2006 here at Parliament House. Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows that nearly two-thirds of Australian men and nearly half of Australian women are overweight or obese. Unhealthy weights are a major contributor to chronic diseases such as diabetes, and they are part of the reason why this generation of children is at risk of being the first to die before their parents. I congratulate the Minister for Education for his initiative in examining these issues within schools. Many chronic diseases are almost entirely preventable if we make better choices about balanced diets and appropriate exercise.

I want to especially draw attention today to the focus of the summit. The Summit on Obesity is a multiagency commitment by my government to do everything we can to help Queenslanders improve their eating and exercise habits. Through the summit we will find ways that not only government but also businesses, community organisations, families and individuals can work together to achieve a healthier Queensland. A range of experts and stakeholders will be attending the summit. Our aim is to identify practical as well as innovative ways to promote and achieve healthier lifestyles for all people. The summit will highlight the evidence pointing to the urgent need for changes in how the community eats and exercises.

Importantly, there will be summit outcomes. We will look at expanding initiatives that are proven to work, such as building on the 'Eat well, be active—healthy kids for life' initiative. We are also encouraging delegates to bring new and innovative ideas to the table. For example, do architects and city planners have a role to play in creating healthier communities and how can we, as a community, help promote and adopt sustainable living? I am not going to pretend that tackling the problem of obesity is easy, or that some quick fix can be put in place. I know from personal experience how tough it is. But this is an issue that cannot be ignored, and my government is being responsible in bringing the experts and stakeholders together to address this very real community problem. The Queensland Summit on Obesity is squarely focused on one goal—to improve the health and life expectancy of the people of Queensland.