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MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**STACY ERWIN OAKES**

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Wednesday, Nov. 23, 2011**

**Rep. Stacy Erwin Oakes**  
**Phone: (517) 373-0152**

**MAHP and Rep. Stacy Erwin Oakes join together for Diabetes  
Awareness Month**

*Diabetes affects a wider range of people than some think*

LANSING – The Michigan Association of Health Plans and State Rep. Stacy Erwin Oakes (D-Saginaw) are joining together to help educate Michiganders about diabetes – and clear up misconceptions about who the disease strikes.

Oakes, who is seemingly young and healthy, was recently diagnosed as borderline diabetic. Rep. Oakes' is a 5'9 former basketball player, mother of two children under the age of four, and a wife. She lost a sister to leukemia so she has her blood work monitored annually in January. She has never struggled with weight or health issues until recently and she decided to get a second blood analysis through her OB-GYN, believing she was pregnant. Rep. Oakes requested all blood test results be sent to her primary care provider who immediately noticed a significant change in her January results and set her up for a consultation that included information from a dietician.

“It is important that people realize diabetes can afflict even those of us who are well within weight guidelines, although some are due to genetic factors, while with others poor diet and a lack of exercise contribute to the diagnoses. I'd like to encourage everyone, particularly young women, to exercise regularly and get tested during an annual checkup, so you can fight this disease as soon as it is detected,” said Rep. Oakes.

Often thought of as a disease afflicting overweight and inactive patients, diabetes actually strikes one in every nine adults, according to the Centers for Disease Control. While obesity is a risk factor, fit and seemingly healthy people can become diabetic also. A particularly significant risk factor for young women is the regulation of weight through food choices alone, rather than regular exercise – behavior that can cause fat to build up around internal organs.

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