



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **CHAIRMAN DINGELL ASKS HHS TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS ABOUT LAB COMPETITIVE BIDDING BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH DEMONSTRATION**

WASHINGTON, D.C – House Energy and Commerce Chairman John D. Dingell (D-MI) wrote HHS Secretary Leavitt today asking that he “respond to a number of questions before CMS proceeds with [the laboratory competitive bidding demonstration] implementation.” In the August 7 letter, Chairman Dingell asks nine questions about the demonstration, including questions about the impact on small laboratories, vulnerable Medicare patients, nursing homes and homebound patients.

“The details of the design, the bidding process, and the calculation of the final demonstration fee schedule are profoundly important when applying competitive bidding to something as complex as providing laboratory services,” Chairman Dingell said in the letter. “Care must be taken that, even in demonstration, the concept neither compromises the availability of quality laboratory services to Medicare beneficiaries, nor adversely affects small laboratories serving vulnerable Medicare populations.”

ACLA President Alan Mertz said, “We applaud Chairman Dingell for recognizing the potential adverse impact competitive bidding could have on Medicare beneficiaries, as well as laboratories, hospitals, nursing homes and others. His letter asks the key questions that remain unanswered about this project.”

Chairman Dingell requested that the Secretary respond by no later than August 20, 2007. A copy of the letter is attached.

ACLA represents the leading local, regional and national laboratories in the United States.

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