



American  
Clinical Laboratory  
Association

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 23, 2007

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## **ACLA Board Chairman to Testify to Congress on Competitive Bidding for Clinical Lab Services**

WASHINGTON, D.C – ACLA Board of Directors' Chairman, Dr. Ronald Weiss, will tell the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Small Business that the competitive bidding model for lab services being considered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services will take a huge toll on small business operations and Medicare beneficiaries including nursing home residents and home-bound patients. Dr. Weiss will provide concrete reasons – in the form of five well founded conclusions – why the demonstration project should be repealed. “I would not like to look back and take any solace in the fact that Medicare patients' laboratory services went to the lowest bidder, while the true cost was poorer quality and limited access.”

The hearing, “Competitive Bidding for Clinical Lab Services: Where it's Heading and What Small Businesses Can Expect”, is scheduled for Wednesday, July 25<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. Eastern time. ACLA and the Clinical Laboratory Coalition encouraged Congress to investigate the many questions, concerns, and complexity associated with the demonstration project. ACLA commends the Committee on Small Business and Chairwoman Velazquez on holding a hearing on such an important issue that has the potential for significant ramifications for Medicare patients and small businesses.

Alan Mertz, President of ACLA, said that laboratory services are an odd place to look for budget savings, “given that laboratory services account for only 1.7% of Medicare spending, but impact an estimated 70% of medical decisions. Such an outcome is penny wise and pound foolish. “

Because laboratory medicine is a medical service and not a medical commodity, no competitive bidding model for laboratory services will meet the objective to provide clinical laboratory services at fees below current Medicare reimbursement rates, while simultaneously maintaining quality and access to care. Alan Mertz adds “It is a simple fact that the design is not fixable”.

ACLA represents local, regional, and national clinical laboratories throughout the United States.

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