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The Leapfrog Group Urges Employers to Publicly Support Executive Order on Health Care Transparency

WASHINGTON, November 17, 2006 - At a national gathering of employers today, Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Michael Leavitt will ask employers to sign a letter of support for President Bush's Executive Order on health care transparency. The Leapfrog Group is urging employers to comply with the Secretary's request. Along with several other organizations and Administration officials, Leapfrog is hosting today's employer summit on the President's Executive Order. Several members of The Leapfrog Group will discuss their progress in implementing value driven health care.

The Leapfrog Group is asking its members, large employers and other health care purchasers, to sign the letter of support that includes committing to action on four quality enhancing activities through their health care procurement strategies:

- Support the use of health information technology;
- Support the provision of information on provider quality to enrollees using nationally standardized measures of performance;
- Support the provision of provider pricing information to enrollees; and,
- Support means to align incentives for high-quality and cost-effective health care.

Leapfrog members, all of whom already have made a commitment to Leapfrog's Purchasing Principles, are uniquely positioned to answer the Secretary's call since the Purchasing Principles are aligned with those outlined above.

"Most of the members of The Leapfrog Group have already made significant progress towards meeting goals on health care transparency," stated Catherine Eikel, Director of Programs, The Leapfrog Group. "The Secretary's call for support helps invigorate Leapfrog and its members to keep up their pace of activism for a transparent health care system."

Drawing from its experience in using employer power to leverage health system change, Leapfrog provided guidance in the development of a new Employer Tool Kit also released by the Secretary today (view this and other resources at <http://www.hhs.gov/transparency/employers/>). This Tool Kit provides recommendations for employers to move forward on transparency, HIT adoption and provider and consumer incentives. The Tool Kit – which is aligned with successful efforts such as Bridges to Excellence, NBCH's eValue8 tool, and various initiatives of The Leapfrog Group – assists employers in using their purchasing power by collaborating with health plans to advance the goals of the Executive Order.

About The Leapfrog Group

On behalf of the millions of Americans for whom many of the nation's largest corporations and public agencies buy health benefits, The Leapfrog Group aims to use its members' collective leverage to initiate breakthrough improvements in the safety, quality, and affordability of health care for Americans. It is a voluntary program aimed at mobilizing employer purchasing power to alert America's health industry that big leaps in health care safety, quality and customer value will be recognized and rewarded. The Leapfrog Group was founded in November 2000 by the Business Roundtable and has support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, as well as its members and other funders. For more information, visit www.leapfroggroup.org.

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