



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20415-1000

AUG 08 2005

The Honorable Jon Porter
Chairman
Subcommittee on Federal Workforce
and Agency Organization
Committee on Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter of July 14, 2005 concerning the Federal Employee Dental and Vision Benefits Enhancement Act of 2004. I share your concern that Federal employees have access to a full range of dental and vision benefits.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the market for these types of benefits, OPM staff has met with a number of dental and vision benefit providers. They include representatives from indemnity products, dental health maintenance organizations, and preferred provider network programs. OPM staff is now developing a proposed program design and administrative structure under which we will offer these new benefit programs.

OPM's solicitation for prospective applicants will include competition and choice – tenets that have made the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program a successful model of competition. The solicitation will be broad enough to accommodate a wide variety of product types, including national and regional vendors. We expect that the solicitation will lead to a healthy competition among potential providers. And, our intention is that the final outcome will be a program that represents choice as well as a cost-efficient and -effective approach capable of meeting the needs of prospective enrollees.

Thank you for your interest in this new employee benefits program. I look forward to working with you on issues affecting our Federal workforce.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "LMS", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Linda M. Springer
Director