



News From:  
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## **DELAURO AND LARSON SEEK ANSWERS, ACTION ON FLU VACCINE**

WASHINGTON, D.C.- U.S. Reps. Rosa DeLauro and John B. Larson today sent a letter to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Tommy Thompson, seeking answers as to when and how the federal government planned to secure adequate doses of flu vaccine for Americans, as well as how health crises such as this will be avoided in the future.

The text of the letter is below:

October 21, 2004

The Honorable Tommy G. Thompson  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Secretary Thompson:

We are writing today because of our great concern over the recent news that the U.S. supply of flu vaccine has been cut in half when British regulators shut down shipments from Chiron Corporation. As you know, about 36,000 Americans die from flu-related complications each year and more than 200,000 Americans are hospitalized. The U.S. has been left with 54 million doses instead of the anticipated 100 million doses and we have been contacted by a number of our constituents concerned that they or their loved ones will not be able to get their flu shot. Several of our elderly constituents have told us about waiting in line for hours for flu shots that they never get. We, too, are concerned about what policies have been implemented to address this and hope you can help clarify them. Therefore, we have a number of questions about how this problem will be remedied and avoided in years to come.

On Wednesday, October 13, President Bush declared that,