



January 21, 2009

Responding to the Highmark and Independence Blue Cross withdrawal of their transactional filing to consolidate operations, Commissioner Joel Ario issued the following statement:

“We welcome the applicants’ decision to withdraw their proposed consolidation. We were prepared to issue a disapproval order on January 27, but this withdrawal smoothes the process and allows all parties to focus on the challenges we all face in addressing the larger health care crisis.

“We have scheduled a news conference for tomorrow morning to address the issues raised by the proposed consolidation in more depth.”

###