

## Dingell, Stupak Commend Increase of FDA Chinese Seafood Inspection, Demand Greater FDA Accountability in Protecting American Food Supply

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### NEWS RELEASE

Committee on Energy and Commerce

Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman

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Washington, D.C. — Leaders of the Committee on Energy and Commerce responded today to a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announcement that it will detain several types of Chinese seafood imports at U.S. borders for inspection. According to FDA, a new policy will require “broader import control of all farm-raised catfish, basa, shrimp, dace (related to carp), and eel from China. FDA will start to detain these products at the border until the shipments are proven to be free of residues from drugs that are not approved in the United States for use in farm-raised aquatic animals.” This announcement follows repeated findings of banned antimicrobial contaminants in seafood shipments from China between October 2006 and May 2007, as well as several recent safety concerns over food and products imported from China.

“It is troublesome that the FDA requires considerable pressure before it acts to protect the public health,” said Rep. John D. Dingell (D-MI), Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. “As the Committee’s investigation into food imports, particularly those from China, has expanded, FDA has discovered it must intensify efforts

to protect American consumers. While this clearly demonstrates the value of Congressional oversight, we should not have to launch an oversight inquiry in order for FDA to do its job."

"While I am pleased that the FDA realizes the danger these Asian and Chinese seafood imports pose to the American people and public health, I am concerned that it requires Congressional prodding of the FDA to take the steps necessary to keep American consumers safe," said Rep. Bart Stupak (D-MI), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. "As concerns about food safety mount, the FDA always seems to be a step behind. The FDA's plan to close and consolidate their field labs is particularly worrisome. Our Subcommittee will continue pressuring FDA to keep the public safe and I will continue to oppose structural changes at FDA that would diminish our nation's food safety net."

The FDA's announcement can be accessed at: [http://www.fda.gov/ora/fiars/ora\\_import\\_ia16131.html](http://www.fda.gov/ora/fiars/ora_import_ia16131.html).

On April 24, 2007, the Committee's Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee held a hearing on the FDA's food inspection program entitled "Diminished Capacity: Can the FDA Assure the Safety and Security of the Nation's Food Supply?" Hearing information can be found at <http://energycommerce.house.gov>.

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Prepared by the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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