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Mayor Dixon Gathers Local Leaders to *ACT! Against AIDS* in Baltimore

Baltimore, MD (October 3, 2007) – Mayor Sheila Dixon and the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene will officially join the Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC) Heightened National Response to the HIV/AIDS Crisis Among African Americans with a press conference at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, October 3, 2007, at City Hall.

Mayor Dixon is asking Baltimore leaders to **ACT!**– promoting HIV/AIDS Awareness, Communication, and Testing in response to the HIV/AIDS crisis in Baltimore. Leaders from the arts and entertainment, business, civic, education, faith and media sectors will gather for a morning workshop session and dialogue on the future of coordinated efforts to reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS in the city.

The Baltimore metropolitan area has the fifth highest rate of AIDS case reports in the country with more than 14,000 people living with HIV/AIDS in Baltimore as of June 2006. In addition, AIDS is the leading cause of death among African Americans aged 25 to 44 in Maryland.

“Whether through our loved ones, our employees or our neighbors, the AIDS crisis in Baltimore affects each and every one of us,” said Mayor Dixon. “And it’s going to take each and every one of us working together to educate and inform the African American community in how to take control of their health and take responsibility for their future,” said Mayor Dixon.

Baltimore is one of 11 cities across the country participating in the CDC’s Heightened National Response campaign. As part of that campaign, the *ACT! Against AIDS* mobilization effort seeks to break the silence and increase awareness of HIV/AIDS among friends, family and co-workers; deliver communication messages in places where African Americans live, work, play and worship; and promote testing that will lead to early diagnosis and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

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