

**Opening Statement of Senator Herb Kohl**  
**April 19, 2007**  
**Special Committee on Aging Hearing**  
**“Bio-Identical Hormones: Sound Science or Bad Medicine”**

Thank you, Senator Smith, for holding today’s hearing. We welcome our witnesses and look forward to their testimony. In particular, I want to welcome Eileen Harrington of the Federal Trade Commission. Ms. Harrington is originally from my home state and it’s always good to hear from a fellow Wisconsinite.

The issue of hormone therapy for women is an important and complicated one. As we know, the two main types of therapy are traditional hormone replacement therapy (HRT) and bio-identical hormone replacement therapy (BHRT). In the past few years, experts have debated the benefits, safety and effectiveness of both. Research on these therapies is limited, and in some instances, controversial. Further complicating these issues is the role of compounding pharmacists. While many claim the practice of compounding is safe and of great benefit to patients, questions have arisen regarding the oversight of these pharmacists and the products they develop.

We still have a lot to learn on all of these issues. The bottom line is that we must ensure that women have all the facts when choosing an appropriate therapy, and that the government is doing its job to ensure these products are safe and effective.

I thank Senator Smith once again for his hard work on this and other issues that come before our Committee. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses.