[BILLING CODE: 6750-01S]

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

[File No. 111 0155]

Laboratory Corporation of America Holdings and Orchid Cellmark Inc.; Analysis of Proposed Agreement Containing Consent Orders to Aid Public Comment

AGENCY: Federal Trade Commission.

ACTION: Proposed Consent Agreement.

SUMMARY: The consent agreement in this matter settles alleged violations of federal law prohibiting unfair or deceptive acts or practices or unfair methods of competition. The attached Analysis to Aid Public Comment describes both the allegations in the draft complaint and the terms of the consent order -- embodied in the consent agreement -- that would settle these allegations.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before January 9, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Interested parties may file a comment online or on paper, by following the instructions in the Request for Comment part of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below. Write "LabCorp/Orchid, File No. 111 0155" on your comment, and file your comment online at https://ftcpublic.commentworks.com/ftc/labcorporchidconsent, by following the instructions on the web-based form. If you prefer to file your comment on paper, mail or deliver your comment to the following address: Federal Trade Commission, Office of the Secretary, Room H-113 (Annex D), 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20580.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Barnett (202-326-2362), FTC, Bureau of Competition, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20580.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to section 6(f) of the Federal Trade Commission Act, 38 Stat. 721, 15 U.S.C. 46(f), and § 2.34 the Commission Rules of Practice, 16 CFR 2.34, notice is hereby given that the above-captioned consent agreement containing a consent order to cease and desist, having been filed with and accepted, subject to final approval, by the Commission, has been placed on the public record for a period of thirty (30) days. The following Analysis to Aid Public Comment describes the terms of the consent agreement, and the allegations in the complaint. An electronic copy of the full text of the consent agreement package can be obtained from the FTC Home Page (for December 8, 2011), on the World Wide Web, at http://www.ftc.gov/os/actions.shtm. A paper copy can be obtained from the FTC Public Reference Room, Room 130-H, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20580, either in person or by calling (202) 326-2222.

You can file a comment online or on paper. For the Commission to consider your comment, we must receive it on or before January 9, 2012. Write "LabCorp/Orchid, File No. 111 0155" on your comment. Your comment – including your name and your state – will be placed on the public record of this proceeding, including, to the extent practicable, on the public Commission Website, at http://www.ftc.gov/os/publiccomments.shtm. As a matter of discretion, the Commission tries to remove individuals' home contact information from comments before placing them on the Commission Website.

Because your comment will be made public, you are solely responsible for making sure that your comment does not include any sensitive personal information, like anyone's Social Security number, date of birth, driver's license number or other state identification number or foreign country equivalent, passport number, financial account number, or credit or debit card number. You are also solely responsible for making sure that your comment does not include any sensitive health information, like medical records or other individually identifiable health information. In addition, do not include any "[t]rade secret or any commercial or financial information which is obtained from any person and which is privileged or confidential," as provided in Section 6(f) of the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. 46(f), and FTC Rule 4.10(a)(2), 16 CFR 4.10(a)(2). In particular, do not include competitively sensitive information such as costs, sales statistics, inventories, formulas, patterns, devices, manufacturing processes, or customer names.

If you want the Commission to give your comment confidential treatment, you must file it in paper form, with a request for confidential treatment, and you have to follow the procedure explained in FTC Rule 4.9(c), 16 CFR 4.9(c).[1] Your comment will be kept confidential only if the FTC General Counsel, in his or her sole discretion, grants your request in accordance with the law and the public interest.

Postal mail addressed to the Commission is subject to delay due to heightened security screening. As a result, we encourage you to submit your comments online. To make sure that the Commission considers your online comment, you must file it at https://ftcpublic.commentworks.com/ftc/labcorporchidconsent by following the instructions on the web-based form. If this Notice appears at http://www.regulations.gov/#!home, you also may file a comment through that website.

If you file your comment on paper, write "LabCorp/Orchid, File No. 111 0155" on your comment and on the envelope, and mail or deliver it to the following address: Federal Trade Commission, Office of the Secretary, Room H-113 (Annex D), 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW,

---

[1] In particular, the written request for confidential treatment that accompanies the comment must include the factual and legal basis for the request, and must identify the specific portions of the comment to be withheld from the public record. *See* FTC Rule 4.9(c), 16 CFR 4.9(c).

Washington, DC 20580. If possible, submit your paper comment to the Commission by courier or overnight service.

Visit the Commission Website at http://www.ftc.gov to read this Notice and the news release describing it. The FTC Act and other laws that the Commission administers permit the collection of public comments to consider and use in this proceeding as appropriate. The Commission will consider all timely and responsive public comments that it receives on or before January 9, 2012. You can find more information, including routine uses permitted by the Privacy Act, in the Commission's privacy policy, at http://www.ftc.gov/ftc/privacy.htm.

Analysis of Agreement Containing Consent Order to Aid Public Comment

I. Introduction

The Federal Trade Commission ("Commission") has accepted, subject to final approval, an Agreement Containing Consent Orders ("Consent Agreement") with Laboratory Corporation of America Holdings ("LabCorp"), which is designed to remedy the anticompetitive effects of its proposed acquisition of Orchid Cellmark Inc. ("Orchid"). Under the terms of the Consent Agreement, LabCorp is required to divest Orchid's U.S. government paternity testing services business to DNA Diagnostics Center ("DDC"). The Consent Agreement also requires LabCorp to facilitate the assignment of Orchid's current government contracts to provide paternity testing services. The assets involved include all of the necessary relevant equipment, books and records, and other information necessary for DDC to bid competitively for future government paternity testing services business. With this Consent Agreement, the competition that would otherwise be eliminated through the proposed acquisition of Orchid by LabCorp will be fully preserved.

The proposed Consent Agreement has been placed on the public record for thirty days for receipt of comments by interested persons. Comments received during this period will become part of the public record. After thirty days, the Commission will again review the proposed Consent Agreement and the comments received, and will decide whether it should withdraw from the proposed Consent Agreement, modify it, or make final the accompanying Decision and Order ("Order").

Pursuant to an Agreement and Plan of Merger dated April 5, 2011, LabCorp intends to acquire Orchid in a cash tender offer valued at approximately $85.4 million. Both parties provide paternity testing services to government agencies, and are by far the largest providers of those services in the United States. The Commission's complaint alleges that the proposed acquisition, if consummated, would violate Section 7 of the Clayton Act, as amended, 15 U.S.C. § 18, and Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, as amended, 15 U.S.C. § 45, in U.S. markets for the provision of paternity testing services to state and local government agencies. The proposed Consent Agreement remedies the alleged violations by replacing the lost competition in the relevant market that would result from the acquisition.

II. The Products and Structure of the Markets

DNA paternity testing services for government agencies is a relevant product market in which to analyze the competitive effects of the proposed acquisition. No other types of paternity testing services, like blood testing, meet government agencies' requirements. LabCorp and Orchid are the two principal competitors in the United States for government paternity testing services contracts – they are the only two firms that consistently bid for these contracts, they account for the overwhelming majority of awarded contracts, and they have been the winner and runner-up in most of these bids. As a result, LabCorp and Orchid accounted for the overwhelming majority of the business in this roughly $27 million market.

III. Entry

The anticompetitive impact of LabCorp's acquisition of Orchid is not likely to be averted by entry or expansion from other DNA testing labs. Most other DNA testing laboratories do not have the scale or the experience needed to compete effectively for government contracts.

IV. Effects of the Acquisition

The proposed acquisition likely would result in significant anticompetitive harm in the highly-concentrated relevant market for government paternity testing services. LabCorp and Orchid are the only significant competitors in this highly-concentrated market. Over the past five years, LabCorp and Orchid consistently participated in the vast majority of state and local government bids conducted in the United States, almost always as head-to-head competitors. They bid more often, and typically at lower prices, than any other labs. The acquisition will eliminate this significant head-to-head competition and is likely to result in higher prices for government paternity testing services contracts.

V. The Consent Agreement

The proposed Consent Agreement remedies the competitive concerns raised by the transaction by requiring the parties to divest Orchid's U.S. government paternity testing business to DDC. LabCorp also must divest testing equipment along with contract and service information necessary to enable DDC to replicate Orchid's market position. LabCorp also must facilitate the assignment of all existing government paternity testing services contracts to DDC. This divestiture preserves competition that would otherwise be eliminated as a result of the acquisition.

The proposed Consent Agreement also contains several provisions designed to ensure that the divestiture is successful. LabCorp must provide lab testing services to DDC until the assets are fully transferred and Orchid's government contracts are assigned to DDC. In addition, DDC will have access to the personnel and information that are at Orchid's Dayton facility. Finally, LabCorp cannot use or retain any confidential business information except as necessary to maintain the assets for DDC's use during the transition period. To prevent improper sharing of information, a manager of the business being transferred who reports directly to Commission staff will be put in place.

DDC is a respected provider of paternity testing services for both private and government customers. DDC operates a testing laboratory located in Fairfield, Ohio that, with the divested assets and business, will enable DDC to effectively replace Orchid as the primary competitor to LabCorp. DDC has the resources and experience necessary to acquire the divested assets and assume responsibility for Orchid's existing government contracts.

If the Commission determines that either DDC is not an acceptable acquirer of the assets to be divested, or that the manner of the divestitures is not acceptable, LabCorp must unwind the divestiture and divest the assets within six months of the date the Order becomes final to another Commission-approved acquirer. If LabCorp fails to divest the assets within the six months, the Commission may appoint a trustee to divest the relevant assets.

The purpose of this analysis is to facilitate public comment on the proposed Consent Agreement, and it is not intended to constitute an official interpretation of the proposed Consent Agreement or to modify its terms in any way.

By direction of the Commission.

Donald S. Clark
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2011-32125 Filed 12/14/2011 at 8:45 am; Publication Date: 12/15/2011]