



FIRST FOCUS
CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN

January 10, 2011

The Honorable Louise McIntosh Slaughter
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Slaughter,

I am writing on behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children, a bipartisan organization advocating for legislative change in Congress to ensure children and families are a priority in federal policy and budget decisions, to thank you for your leadership in reintroducing the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act of 2011 (H.R. 965).

As an organization committed to protecting and improving the health of our nation's children, we applaud efforts to stop the spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria that disproportionately harm children through limiting their use in farm animals.

Eighty percent of all antibiotics sold in the U.S. are given to healthy food animals, generally without the oversight of a veterinarian or other health specialist. This practice creates new strains of deadly antibiotic-resistant bacteria that reach children and adults through the food supply. Antibiotic-resistant bacteria are more expensive to treat, require multiple applications of antibiotics, and longer hospital stays.

Antibiotic-resistant bacteria also disproportionately affect children. Children are particularly vulnerable to antibiotic-resistant infections because they are at a greater risk of severe complications if they become infected with resistant bacteria. Children are also less able to fight infection because their immune systems are still developing and they are limited in the types of antibiotics they can take when sick.

This legislation would protect children from antibiotic-resistant bacteria by limiting the use of seven classes of antibiotics to treat animals, and instead reserving their use for humans. It would require HHS to withdraw approval of the non-therapeutic use of critical antimicrobial drugs in food-producing animals two years after it is enacted and instruct congressional committees to hold hearings on any withdrawals of approval.

In addition, H.R. 965 would require the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to deny any applications for new critical antimicrobial animal drugs unless the application proves with reasonable certainty that the drug will not harm humans by contributing to the development of antimicrobial resistance. It would not stop the use of drugs to treat a sick animal, but instead just non-therapeutic uses. Critical antimicrobial animal drugs are defined as "those intended for use in food-producing animals that contains specified antibiotics or other drugs used in humans to treat or prevent disease or infection caused by microorganisms." This legislation is supported by over 300 organizations, including the World Health Organization and the American Medical Association.

We are grateful for your leadership in reintroducing this legislation and we welcome the opportunity to work with you on this and other proposals to address the health needs of our nation's children.

Sincerely,

Bruce Lesley



FIRST FOCUS
CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN

January 10, 2011

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein,

I am writing on behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children, a bipartisan organization advocating for legislative change in Congress to ensure children and families are a priority in federal policy and budget decisions, to thank you for your leadership in introducing the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act of 2011 (S. 1211).

As an organization committed to protecting and improving the health of our nation's children, we applaud efforts to stop the spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria that disproportionately harm children through limiting their use in farm animals.

Eighty percent of all antibiotics sold in the U.S. are given to healthy food animals, generally without the oversight of a veterinarian or other health specialist. This practice creates new strains of deadly antibiotic-resistant bacteria that reach children and adults through the food supply. Antibiotic-resistant bacteria are more expensive to treat, require multiple applications of antibiotics, and longer hospital stays.

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In addition, S. 1211 would require the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to deny any applications for new critical antimicrobial animal drugs unless the application proves with reasonable certainty that the drug will not harm humans by contributing to the development of antimicrobial resistance. It would not stop the use of drugs to treat a sick animal, but instead just non-therapeutic uses. Critical antimicrobial animal drugs are defined as "those intended for use in food-producing animals that contains specified antibiotics or other drugs used in humans to treat or prevent disease or infection caused by microorganisms." This legislation is supported by over 300 organizations, including the World Health Organization and the American Medical Association.

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