

August 27, 2020  
The Honorable Jan Schakowsky  
2367 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Schakowsky,

On behalf of our more than 11 million members and supporters, our sixteen organizations thank you for securing commonsense antibiotic stewardship measures in H.R. 7608, which included this year's Agricultural Appropriations bill. Without urgent action to curb overuse, experts warn our lifesaving antibiotics may soon become ineffective. Fortunately, you and your staff rose to the challenge by securing provisions to limit antibiotic overuse, and to help preserve these precious medicines for future generations.

Effective antibiotics are a cornerstone of modern medicine. Without them, even routine surgeries will become riskier and, at times, impractical. Yet current practice increasingly selects for the proliferation of bacterial infections that are hard or impossible to treat with these drugs. U.S. livestock production, for example, gives antibiotics to herds of animals for disease prevention regardless of whether any animals are sick – this describes most antibiotics used today on U.S. pig farms and beef feedlots.

About one-third the antibiotics given to herds or flocks currently carry labels without any time (duration) limits. Potentially, they can be fed for the animals' entire life in that facility, in other words. The lack of duration limits at this scale is alarming: the longer antibiotics are given to livestock, the higher the risk that resistant bacteria will emerge on these farms and spread. These drug-resistant bacteria can and do infect humans where they can be harmful or even lethal.

We are truly grateful for your leadership in championing this vital aspect of antibiotic stewardship. Your efforts have drawn much needed attention to the conditions leading to significant antibiotic overuse in livestock settings. It is no exaggeration to say that enacting duration limits will help save lives.

We would also like to express deep gratitude to your staff, Osaremen Okolo and Brian Gray, who invested much time and energy into this important effort. Thank you once again and we look forward to continuing our work with you.

Sincerely,

Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists  
Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Humane Society of the United States  
Humane Society Legislative Fund  
Center for Science in the Public Interest  
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future  
San Francisco Marin Medical Society  
U.S. PIRG  
Food Animal Concerns Trust

Clinician Champions in Comprehensive  
Antibiotic Stewardship  
San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social  
Responsibility  
Center for Food Safety  
Illinois PIRG  
Antibiotic Resistance Action Center, GWU  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Consumer Reports