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KEEP ANTIBIOTICS WORKING APPLAUDS AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION FOR ADOPTING MORE STRINGENT POLICY ON REDUCING ANTIBIOTICS IN FOOD ANIMALS

Coalition Calls for Stronger Federal Response to Address the “Catastrophic Threat” of Antibiotic Resistance

Chicago, IL -- The American Medical Association (AMA), the nation's largest physician group, adopted a new policy earlier this month at its annual meeting in Chicago supporting far-reaching efforts to ban use of antibiotics in food animals for growth promotion and improve the collection of data on how and where animal antibiotics are being used. The policy falls on the heels of [a new report](#) by the World Health Association alarmed by the onset of "a post-antibiotic era."

Keep Antibiotics Working (KAW), a coalition of health, consumer, agricultural, environmental, animal welfare, and other advocacy groups, applauds the AMA for its support of action by the federal authorities to ban antibiotics used for growth promotion and improve the collection of data on antibiotic use.

"Timely implementation of this policy will help stave off a future where antibiotics no longer work. Such a future would mean greater suffering and death for children, cancer patients, transplant recipients, and other patients who need them," said David Wallinga, MD, a physician on the Keep Antibiotics Working steering committee.

While the FDA has authority to control how antibiotics are used in food animals and has acknowledged that food animal use contributes to the antibiotic resistance crisis, the agency has failed to take any steps that will lead to significant reductions in antibiotic overuse, and has failed to collect needed information on how antibiotics are used on farm.

With such ineffective leadership on the part of the FDA, stronger Congressional action is essential, which is why KAW has been advocating for swift action in the Preventing Antibiotic Resistance Act (PARA), introduced last year, and its companion bill in the House, the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (PAMTA). The bills – which AMA has consistently supported – would help curb routine antibiotic misuse on the farm by requiring the FDA to phase out the use of medically important antibiotics in food animals that are not sick unless such use is proven to be safe.

Another important bill pending in Congress, the Delivering Antimicrobial Transparency in Animals (DATA) Act, would direct FDA to enhance its collection and reporting on antibiotic use in food animals. These pieces of legislation all face an uphill battle against the deep pockets of the agricultural and pharmaceutical lobbies.

If you'd like to connect with members of the Keep Antibiotics Working coalition for further comment, please contact Katie Andriulli at kandriulli@mrss.com or (917) 438-4605.

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Keep Antibiotics Working (KAW) is a coalition of health, consumer, agricultural, environmental, humane, and other advocacy groups with more than 11 million supporters. Learn more at www.keepantibioticsworking.com.