Dear Secretary Becerra,

We respectfully request a meeting to discuss the neglected public health crisis of antibiotic resistance and the urgent need for your leadership on federal action. We seek a public commitment to the following steps as critically important to protect the public from the spread of antibiotic resistance, and to ensure the future effectiveness of antibiotics that are essential to modern medicine:

- **Set national HHS-wide targets for reducing antibiotic use in both human medicine and food animals, along with timelines for reaching those targets.**

- **Direct the FDA to robustly collect and analyze antibiotic use information from feed mills.** Around two-thirds of all medically important livestock antibiotics are mixed into animal feed for eventual feeding to groups of animals. Under existing regulations, mills must notify the FDA before distributing feed containing medically important antibiotics, keep veterinary orders with indication and dose information along with records of the amount of feed distributed under each order, and then make these records available to the FDA for inspection. FDA should require mills to submit these data and then analyze these data as a source of information on how and what antibiotics are used on farms.

- **Ensure all federal antibiotic sales and use information is housed within a central HHS office** (‘Mission Control’), funded to analyze both antibiotic use and resistance information across human and animal settings, and environments, and publish fully-integrated annual reports on it.
  - **Expand HHS/FDA reporting to include all antibiotic drug sales, not just livestock sales.** Break these sales out by individual state.
  - **Work with EPA to report antibiotic sales each year for non-animal agricultural uses, such as pesticides on crops or orchards.**

Globally, antibiotic resistant infections took the lives of over 1.2 million people in 2019 and, in the U.S., they kill at least 35,000 people each year – and possibly five times as many. Antibiotic resistance can affect anyone. However, the millions of people in the United States who are suffering from chronic illness, cancer, kidney failure, or are undergoing surgery are at a much higher risk of getting sick and subsequently dying from resistant infections. By 2050, the global toll from antibiotic-resistant infections may reach 10 million deaths annually.
Despite ongoing, global spread of these deadly “superbug” bacteria, the U.S. response has fallen short on curbing its chief driver – widespread and avoidable overuse of these precious medicines. One prime example is that U.S. policymakers still have not met the public health imperative to build systems that can robustly track where and how antibiotics are used, especially in non-human settings such as farms and feedlots. Without these tracking systems, patterns of antibiotic overuse cannot be identified and efforts to end that overuse are not mounted.

Antibiotic overuse and the spread of antibiotic resistance are intertwined. The first speeds up the second. To protect against the spread of resistance, the U.S. needs a comprehensive system that monitors antibiotic use and levels of resistance across the various settings in which they occur. Drug-resistant bacteria travel easily between animals and people and throughout their shared environments. Effective surveillance for antibiotic resistance, therefore, must fully integrate information from all these settings, using what is now called a One Health approach.\textsuperscript{ii}

We look forward to meeting with you. Please contact Steve Roach, sroach@foodanimalconcerns.org, to coordinate the details of that meeting. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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Health Care Without Harm

ii According to the CDC ([One Health Basics](https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/avianflu/onehealth/basics.html)), a *One Health* approach simply recognizes the health of people, animals, and their shared environments are interconnected.