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**House Ag Subcommittee Hears Testimony From Industry:
Ignores Consensus on Danger of the Overuse of Animal
Antibiotics**

KAW Urges House to Put Public Health above Industry Interests

Washington, D.C. – Today the Livestock Subcommittee of House Agricultural Committee held a hearing on the animal use of antibiotics that failed to address the mounting body of scientific evidence concluding that the overuse of antibiotics is contributing to the number one public health problem facing the U.S., the crisis of antibiotic resistance.

Keep Antibiotics Working, a national coalition of health, consumer, progressive agricultural, environmental, humane, and other advocacy groups with more than ten million supporters noted that, despite the centrality of human health, the panels were dominated by veterinarians and industry representatives rather than medical or public health professionals.

The hearing was apparently intended to give the agriculture industry an opportunity to counter testimony in earlier hearings that highlighted the dangerous relationship between overuse of antimicrobials in animal agriculture and the rise in antibiotic resistance in humans.

“Ignoring the growing crisis of antibiotic resistance in both human and animal medicine will not make it disappear,” said Dr. Margaret Mellon, Senior Scientist, Union of Concerned Scientists.

“There is solid consensus among medical and public health officials that the profligate use of antibiotics in both human medicine and animal agriculture is eroding the efficacy of our arsenal of antibiotics,” said David Wallinga, M.D. of IATP. “It is time for the animal production industry to quit denying the evidence and roll up its sleeves to work together with doctors and public health officials to solve the problem,” Dr. Wallinga continued.

As an example of the growing international consensus, the South Korean government recently banned the use of seven antibiotics in animal feed in Korea.

Seventy percent of all the antibiotics used in the United States are used as feed additives for chickens, hogs, and beef cattle. Antibiotic feed additives are used without a prescription to help animals grow slightly faster – and to compensate for crowded, often unsanitary conditions on industrial-scale farms.

The Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (PAMTA) would help combat the antibiotic resistance crisis America is currently facing. The bill would

require the FDA to review prior approvals for antibiotics such as penicillin and tetracycline to determine whether they can be safely used as animal feed additives.

PAMTA is widely supported by the public health, scientific and medical communities. The American Medical Association, the Infectious Diseases Society of America, and the American Academy of Pediatrics are among the more than 350 health, agriculture and other groups nationwide that have endorsed this legislation.