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Top Environmental Attorney Joins “Keep Antibiotics Working” Campaign as New Director

Former Justice Department Official to Lead Campaign to End Antibiotic Overuse in Animals

Washington, DC - The Keep Antibiotics Working (KAW) campaign today announced it has hired Peter Coppelman, the former Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Environment and Resources Division of the Justice Department during the Clinton administration, as its new director. Formally launched last October, the KAW campaign (www.KeepAntibioticsWorking.com) is a coalition of health, consumer, agricultural, environmental and other advocacy groups with more than nine million members dedicated to eliminating a major cause of antibiotic resistance: the inappropriate use of antibiotics in farm animals.

“Peter helped run what has been called ‘the largest environmental law firm in the world’ at the Justice Department,” said Karen Florini, Keep Antibiotics Working steering committee and a senior attorney at Environmental Defense. “His distinguished, three-decade career representing corporations, government and non-profits in state and federal litigation and legislation makes him the perfect fit to lead our campaign working with these very same groups to stop antibiotic overuse in farm animals.”

“I think most Americans would be outraged to learn - as I was - that an estimated 70 percent of the antibiotics used in the U.S. are wasted on healthy farm animals and that over half of these drugs are identical or closely related to antibiotics used to treat sick people,” said Coppelman. “This campaign’s success is a vital component to help ensure that we keep antibiotics working for everyone, especially for people who depend on antibiotics for their very survival, such as cancer patients, premature babies, and seniors.”

Most recently, Coppelman served as Special Counsel of the **California-based** law firm of Sheppard Mullin, where he represented the Metropolitan Water District of **Southern California, Orange County** and others in endangered species and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) cases. Before serving in the Justice Department from 1994 until 2001, Coppelman established the Washington, DC office for Greenfield Environmental, a recycling, solid and waste management company, where he served as Counsel for Federal Legal Affairs. Coppelman also served as Vice President and General Counsel of The Wilderness Society.

A native of Brookline, Massachusetts, Coppelman received his J.D. from **Cornell Law School** and an A.B. from **Harvard University** where he graduated magna cum laude and earned a Fullbright Scholarship to India.