



July 13, 2010

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Health  
House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone:

Please find attached written responses to questions for the record from the Subcommittee's April 28 hearing on antimicrobial resistance. These responses provide additional detail on the strong scientific evidence of a link between antibiotic use in food animals and antibiotic resistance in humans.

There are multiple North American studies describing how:

- Use of antibiotics in animals results in resistant bacteria in food animals
- Resistant bacteria are present in the food supply and transmitted to humans
- Resistant bacteria result in adverse human health consequences (such as increased hospitalizations)

In addition, a strong body of evidence from Europe demonstrates that antibiotic use in animals is linked with antibiotic resistance in humans. Multiple studies looked at the effects of the Danish ban on non-therapeutic use of antibiotics in food animals. We have thoroughly reviewed these studies and have found them to be well-designed and rigorous, and to establish a clear link between antibiotic use in animals and antibiotic resistance in humans.

I appreciate this opportunity to restate my conclusions from the April hearing, and provide you additional detail. This opportunity is particularly important because some discussion at the hearing has been mischaracterized. To be clear, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) finds that there is a compelling body of evidence to demonstrate this link, as summarized above, in my April testimony, and in the attached responses to questions for the record. I am pleased that the Subcommittee is holding another hearing in its series on this important issue, and that Dr. Ali Khan will be able to represent CDC to further elaborate on this evidence regarding the relationship between antibiotic use in food animals and antibiotic resistance in humans.

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CDC remains committed to working with Congress and our colleagues at the Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to identify the best ways to address the health risks posed by antibiotic resistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas R. Frieden". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'T'.

Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director, CDC, and  
Administrator, Agency for Toxic Substances  
and Disease Registry

Cc: Rep. John Shimkus, Ranking Member  
Anthony Fauci, NIH  
Margaret Hamburg, FDA  
Josh Sharfstein, FDA  
Ali Khan, CDC