

May 17th, 2022

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Chair
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Ranking Member
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2322 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Pallone and Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers:

As the House Energy and Commerce Committee continues to deliberate critical legislation to reauthorize the Prescription Drug User Fee Agreement (PDUFA), we urge you to consider adding the Pioneering Antimicrobial Subscriptions to End Upsurging Resistance (PASTEUR) Act (H.R. 3932/S.2076), bipartisan legislation that will strengthen the antibiotic development pipeline and tackle the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

AMR is one of the greatest public health threats of our time. At least 2.8 million people suffer from drug-resistant infections each year in the United States, resulting in at least 35,000 deaths. Global disease burden is significant—new research published in *The Lancet* estimates that over 1 million deaths worldwide in 2019 were directly attributed to AMR; more than HIV or malaria. Without swift action, the global death toll could reach a staggering 10 million by 2050.

The problem has only grown more dire in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to a study published recently in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, inappropriate prescription of antibiotics to COVID-19 patients was widespread during the first year of the pandemic and remains a concern. In conjunction with increased use of antibiotics to treat legitimate, secondary bacterial infections, often in medically complex or ventilated patients, this failure to practice appropriate antibiotic stewardship has the potential to accelerate and worsen the AMR threat.

Unfortunately, market factors unique to antibiotics have rendered the current antibiotic development pipeline woefully insufficient for counteracting the rising ineffectiveness of existing drugs. The PASTEUR Act would advance antibiotic drug development through the introduction of subscription-based contracts to encourage the production and supply of urgently needed novel antimicrobial products. In addition, the legislation strengthens antibiotic stewardship programming, investing directly in small, rural, and critical access health care facilities to help stem this burgeoning crisis.

We appreciate the committee's leadership on public policy priorities affecting the nation's health and view the PDUFA reauthorization as an opportunity for the committee to address one of the top public health threats facing the United States through the inclusion of the PASTEUR Act. We thank you for your attention and look forward to working with you to get this vital legislation passed during this Congress.

Sincerely,