



American College of Osteopathic Internists • Stay True to Why You Pursued Medicine

November 29, 2022

The Honorable Michael Bennet  
U.S. Senate  
261 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Todd Young  
U.S. Senate  
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Bennet and Young:

The American College of Osteopathic Internists (ACOI), representing the nation's osteopathic internists, medical subspecialists, fellows, residents, and students, commends your leadership to combat antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and is pleased to offer its endorsement of the *Pioneering Antimicrobial Subscriptions to End Upsurging Resistance (PASTEUR) Act*.

A recent study published in *The Lancet* concluded that AMR is a major global health threat requiring critical investments in intervention strategies.<sup>1</sup> ACOI supports strategies to improve antibiotic stewardship and infection prevention, detection, mitigation, and surveillance; and federal investment is needed to incentivize the development of new antibiotics.

History has shown that simply investing federal funds to move new antibiotics to market is not enough. A subscription program that delinks payments to drug companies from how much medicine they sell, as included in the *PASTEUR Act*, will incentivize manufacturers to enter the antibiotic market by providing a level of financial protection.

Congress cannot afford to wait to act on this important legislation. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, resistant hospital-onset infections and deaths increased at least 15 percent during the first year of the pandemic. This increase could be due to an increase in hospital-acquired infections, as more people were hospitalized because infection control languished as hospital staff were over-burdened with COVID-19, or because antibiotics were overused as people presented with ambiguous respiratory symptoms.<sup>2</sup> Regardless of the reason, the increase in deaths associated with AMR experienced during the pandemic underscores the need for immediate steps to develop new antibiotics.

In an October 2021, the chair and vice chair of the Presidential Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria wrote a letter in support of the *PASTEUR Act* stating that current payment systems and antibiotic prescribing guidelines encourage health care providers to avoid the

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<sup>1</sup> Global burden of bacterial antimicrobial resistance in 2019: a systematic analysis. Jan. 19, 2022. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(21\)02724-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(21)02724-0)

<sup>2</sup> Kane A, Mandel M. The World Needs Better Incentives to Combat Superbugs. The Progressive Policy Institute, Sept. 13, 2022. <https://www.progressivepolicy.org/publication/the-world-needs-better-incentives-to-combat-superbugs/>

use of newer, more expensive antimicrobials, which leads to lower revenue for newly developed agents.<sup>3</sup>

AMR is responsible for the deaths of 50,000 Americans every year, and it costs the U.S. health care system billions annually. Without federal funding for a subscription program, the pipeline of new antimicrobial drugs will continue to fail, and Americans, consequently, will be at risk of dying from infections for which there is increasing resistance to our current arsenal of antibiotics.

It is for these reasons ACOI calls on Congress to pass the *PASTEUR Act* by the end of this year. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Tim McNichol, ACOI Deputy Executive Director at [tmcnichol@acoi.org](mailto:tmcnichol@acoi.org) or (301) 231-8877, or Camille Bonta, ACOI consultant at [cbonta@summithealthconsulting.com](mailto:cbonta@summithealthconsulting.com) or (202) 320-3658.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joanna Kaiser-Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "K".

Joanna Kaiser-Smith, DO, FACOI  
President, American College of Osteopathic Internists

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/paccarb-incentives-leg-letter-oct-6-2021.pdf>