

May 23rd, 2017

Senator Thad Cochran, Chairman
Defense Subcommittee
Senate Committee on Appropriations
122 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Rep. Kay Granger, Chairman
Defense Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
H-405, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20514

Senator Richard Durbin, Ranking Member
Defense Subcommittee
Senate Committee on Appropriations
122 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Rep. Peter J. Visclosky
Defense Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
H-405, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20514

Chairman Cochran, Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Members Durbin and Visclosky:

On behalf of the National Military and Veterans Alliance (NMVA), a nonpartisan policy and advocacy organization composed of military associations and veterans organizations, we ask for your support in Fiscal Year 2018 for a robust federal commitment to combat antibiotic resistance. NMVA is committed to providing a united voice on a wide-range of national affairs and quality of life issues impacting active duty and retired military personnel and their families.

According to conservative estimates by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – antibiotic-resistant infections sicken at least two million Americans and kill 23,000 each year. For active duty military and veterans, the threat is even greater due to risk of injury or trauma, proximity of living quarters and time spent in healthcare facilities. Those who work on threat planning agree that we should classify antibiotic resistance as a serious threat to force readiness and national security. Under current conditions, wound trauma is often treatable in theater with few complications, but the health and viability of our uniformed services would be much more precarious in a world where antibiotics stop working.

In the United States and across the world, we are experiencing a dangerous confluence of events, including an increase in resistant infections and a very thin innovation pipeline for new treatments. In China, for example, common bacteria like *E.coli* have developed multi-drug resistance properties that reduce our ability to fight infection. And these so-called super bugs are being detected in American hospitals with increasing frequency. It is critical that we rapidly respond to this dangerous threat through both the active promotion of antibiotic stewardship in clinical medicine and expanded innovation to quickly discover new antibiotics.

Across the federal government, significant efforts have been made in this fight, including the Department of Defense's (DoD) antimicrobial stewardship program for combating antibiotic resistant bacteria (CARB) and promising research protocols supported by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). But this issue is not one where a short-term investment solves a complex and on-going threat. DoD as well as other agencies working under the CARB initiative require continued congressional support to ensure that we do not return to a world where infectious diseases pose a threat to daily life.

We strongly urge you to provide robust funding for antibiotic stewardship and innovation in FY 2018 and oppose any efforts to cut or otherwise reduce the budget allocation for combating antibiotic resistance. We deeply appreciate your leadership and support for this issue and we look forward to working with you to advance the fight against antibiotic resistance. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



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National Military and Veterans Alliance Member Organizations Supporting this Request

American Logistics Association
American Military Retirees Association
American Military Society
American Retirees Association
Army Navy Union
AMVETS
Association of the United States Navy
Korean War Veterans Foundation
Military Order of Foreign Wars
Military Order of the Purple Heart
Society of Military Widows
The Flag & General Officers Network
The Retired Enlisted Association
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors
Vietnam Veterans of America