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**House Passes Rep. Sherrod Brown's Amendment to Ban School Lunch  
Program from Buying Chicken Treated with Cipro-like Antibiotic**

*Cipro's Effectiveness Compromised*

**Washington, DC** – The U.S. House of Representatives last night passed a measure to ban the federal school lunch program from purchasing poultry treated with Cipro-like antibiotics because this use promotes spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria that cause severe food poisoning. The amendment to the Fiscal Year 2006 Agriculture appropriations bill, offered by **U.S. Rep. Sherrod Brown (D-OH)**, is similar to an amendment offered by U.S. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) that the Senate passed in November 2003 as part of the Fiscal Year 2004 Agriculture appropriations bill. Similar state bills that would ban state school lunch programs from buying chickens treated with Cipro-like antibiotics were introduced earlier this year in Ohio by **State Senator Robert F. Hagan (D-Youngstown, OH)** and in Maine by **State Senator Scott Cowger (D-Kennebec, ME)**.

In October 2000, the Food and Drug Administration proposed to ban the use of Cipro-like antibiotics in poultry. This proposed ban included Baytril, a drug which is almost identical to the human antibiotic Cipro. Both drugs, made by the **Pittsburgh-based Bayer Corp.**, are members of the fluoroquinolone class of antibiotics. The FDA concluded that Baytril use in poultry reduces the effectiveness of Cipro in treating Campylobacter, the most common cause of severe bacterial food poisoning. Cipro is a critical medicine for treating serious cases of bacterial food poisoning in adults. Bayer has refused to withdraw Baytril from the market and instead has fought the proposed ban over the last four years, despite a March ruling by an FDA administrative law judge upholding the proposed ban. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's most recent data show that in 2001 more than one in six Campylobacter infections were resistant to fluoroquinolones.

“Fluoroquinolone-resistant strains of Campylobacter are infecting more and more people who respond poorly or not at all to treating their food poisoning with fluoroquinolones,” said David B. Wallinga, M.D., MPA, senior scientist and director of the Antibiotic Resistance Project at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. “We applaud Rep. Brown for addressing this health issue.”

McDonald's, Dairy Queen, Burger King, Domino's, Hardee's, Wendy's, Popeye's and Subway say they no longer buy chicken treated with fluoroquinolones. Six of the top 20 poultry producers, including Tyson, Gold Kist, ConAgra, Perdue, Foster Farms, and Claxton say they no longer use fluoroquinolones to treat chicken for human consumption.

“If poultry producers can meet the demand of huge restaurant chains for chickens raised without fluoroquinolones, they should have no trouble supplying our public schools.” said Margaret Mellon, J.D., Ph.D., director of the Food and Environment Program at the Union of Concerned Scientists.

**Rep. Brown** and **U.S. Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME)** recently introduced bills (H.R. 2562/ S. 742) that would phase out over two years the use of antibiotics that are important in human medicine as animal feed additives. The American Medical Association is among 385 health, agriculture and other groups nationwide that endorsed similar legislation last year.