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**House Passes Rep. Slaughter's Amendment to Fund Review of Animal Drugs to
Determine if Use Worsens Antibiotic Resistance in Human Resistance**

Washington, DC - The U.S. House of Representatives late yesterday passed an amendment by **U.S. Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY)** that would allocate \$1 million to the Food and Drug Administration's Center for Veterinary Medicine for [application] review activities to assure the safety of animal drugs with respect to antimicrobial [antibiotic] resistance. The amendment, which could speed the review of the use of drugs like penicillin in food animals, was included in the Fiscal Year 2007 Agriculture-Food and Drug Administration appropriations bill.

The Union of Concerned Scientists estimates that 70 percent of the antibiotics and related drugs used in the United States are routinely fed to poultry, swine and beef cattle, but not to treat disease. Instead, these antibiotic feed additives are used to promote slightly faster growth on less feed and to compensate for overcrowded, unsanitary conditions on industrial-scale sized farms. More than half of these drugs are important in human medicine. Growing scientific evidence shows that use of antibiotic feed additives promotes development and spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria that can be transferred to people via air, food, soil and water, making it harder to treat infections in humans.

“We desperately need antibiotics, like penicillin, to stay effective in combating the bacteria that can cause serious infections,” said David Wallinga, M.D., director of the Food and Health Program at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. “Rep. Slaughter deserves our thanks. First, for recognizing that our overuse of antibiotics in livestock worsens the crisis in resistance to the antibiotics we use in people. And then, for acting decisively to do something about it.”

Rep. Slaughter has cosponsored legislation (H.R. 2562/S. 742) endorsed by the American Medical Association and 350 other groups to phase out the use of antibiotics important in human medicine as animal feed additives.

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