



August 5, 2020

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
503 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Brown:

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the devastating toll infectious disease can exact from both a human and economic perspective, hitting hardest among people living with underlying health conditions, older Americans, and communities of color. We appreciate your continued leadership and attention to issues relating to COVID-19, and urge greater attention and action on another infectious disease threat spreading across America: antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Unlike COVID-19, we can see the threat of AMR and we must act now to help turn the tide.

AMR is a threat to all of us, especially people living with chronic conditions. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 2.8 million antibiotic-resistant infections occur in America each year and more than 35,000 people die as a result.¹ Our ability to prevent, treat, and cure infections is foundational to all aspects of modern medicine.

Without effective antibiotics, we lose not just treatments for serious infections, but we also face significantly increased risks from many medical services that rely upon the effective prevention and treatment of infections. Cancer treatments, maternal and infant health, complex procedures like organ transplantation, and common procedures like dialysis all become riskier with the growth of antibiotic-resistant pathogens.

The pipeline of new antibiotics is sparse though the AMR threat is growing. We need action now to encourage the development of new antibiotics to address these threats and assure their availability for patients. There are steps we can all take – from us as patients following the full course of prescribed antibiotics, to providers following clinical guidelines and good stewardship, to policymakers passing legislation that can create the environment to encourage investment in new treatment options.

Recent polling data shows that the vast majority of people share our concerns and want to see collaborative actions taken. Specifically, when presented with background on AMR, 85 percent of those polled said they were concerned about the issue and 76 percent agree that the development of new antibiotics should be a top of high priority.²

¹ CDC. Antibiotic Resistant Threats in the United States, 2019. Available online <https://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/pdf/threats-report/2019-ar-threats-report-508.pdf>

² Lake Research Partners and The Tarrance Group, Survey Findings, “Likely Voters Overwhelmingly Concerned about Antimicrobial Resistance; Support Public Policies to Encourage Development of New Antibiotics.” June 24, 2020. National survey conducted among 1,000 likely 2020 general election voters June 2-5, 2020. Available online <https://www.fightinfectiousdisease.org/post/likely-voters-overwhelmingly-concerned-about-antimicrobial-resistance>.



Thank you for your continued leadership to address the challenges presented within the current pandemic. We urge you to also act on the threats posed by AMR and the need for new antibiotics.

Signed,
The Partnership to Fight Infectious Disease
The Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease
Academy of Medicine of Cleveland and Northern Ohio
American Liver Foundation
Aimed Alliance
Beacon Charitable Pharmacy
Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association
Easter Seals of Central and SE Ohio
Kidney Foundation of Ohio
Ohio Academy of Family Physicians
Ohio Association of Medical Equipment Services
Ohio Osteopathic Association
Ohio Pharmacists Association
Ohio Sickle Cell and Health Association
Ohio State Grange

