

PRESERVATION OF ANTIBIOTICS
FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT ACTHON. LOUISE MCINTOSH SLAUGHTER
OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 8, 2007

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that is critically important in preventing our current stock of antibiotics from becoming obsolete. As a mother, grandmother, and microbiologist, I cannot stress the urgency of this problem enough.

Seven classes of antibiotics that are considered medically important for humans are currently approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for nontherapeutic use in animal agriculture. Among them are penicillins, tetracyclines, macrolides, lincosamides, streptogramins, aminoglycosides, and sulfonamides. These classes of antibiotics are among the most critically important in our arsenal of defense against potentially fatal diseases.

Penicillins, for example, are used to treat infections ranging from strep throat to meningitis. Macrolides and Sulfonamides are used to prevent secondary infections in patients with AIDS and to treat pneumonia in HIV-infected patients. Tetracyclines are used to treat people potentially exposed to anthrax.

Despite their importance in human medicine, these drugs are added to animal feed as growth promotants and for routine disease prevention. This kind of habitual, nontherapeutic use of antibiotics has been conclusively linked to a growing number of incidents of antimicrobial-resistant infections in humans, and may be contaminating ground water with resistant bacteria in rural areas.

The legislation I am introducing today, the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act, would phase out the use of the seven classes of medically significant antibiotics that are currently approved for nontherapeutic use in animal agriculture. Make no mistake, this bill would in no way infringe upon the use of these drugs to treat a sick animal. It simply proscribes their nontherapeutic use.

Although the FDA could withdraw its approval for these antibiotics, its record of reviewing currently approved drugs under existing procedures indicate that it would take nearly a century to get these medically important antibiotics out of the feed given to food producing animals. In October 2000, for example, the FDA began consideration of a proposal to withdraw its approval for the therapeutic use of fluoroquinolones in poultry. The review is still ongoing, and under its regulations, the FDA must review each class of antibiotics separately.

Unfortunately, upcoming actions by the FDA could make us less, not more safe. As antimicrobial resistance is on the rise, the FDA is considering an application to permit the use of a fourth-generation cephalosporin, cefquinome, in animal agriculture. Fourth-generation cephalosporins are used to treat food borne illnesses, including *E. Coli* and *Salmonella*. In Europe, where cefquinome has been approved for use in animal agriculture, scientists have noticed an increase in resistant bacteria. Already, the emerging strains of resistant bacteria are reaching a crisis level here in the United States. That the FDA is currently con-

sidering approval of a drug that will only make humans more vulnerable to resistant bacteria underscores the need for this legislation.

Madam Speaker, when we go to the grocery store to pick up dinner, we should be able to buy our food without worrying that eating it will expose our family to potentially deadly bacteria that will no longer respond to our medical treatments. Unless we act now, we will unwittingly be permitting animals to serve as incubators for resistant bacteria.

It is time for Congress to stand with scientists, the World Health Organization, the American Medical Association, and the National Academy of Sciences and do something to address the spread of resistant bacteria. We cannot afford for our medicines to become obsolete.

I urge my colleagues to support the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act to protect the integrity of our antibiotics and the health of American families.

INTRODUCTION OF “WITNESS SECURITY AND PROTECTION ACT OF 2007”

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 8, 2007

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce the “Witness Security and Protection Act of 2007,” to attempt to provide protection for some of our Nation’s bravest citizens.

Last year, 38-year old John Dowery of East Baltimore, a murder witness, was shot and killed after having Thanksgiving dinner with his family.

Two years ago, Baltimore Police Detective Thomas Newman was murdered following his testimony in a shooting trial.

Three years ago, Edna McAbier of North Baltimore survived a series of violent attacks in apparent retaliation for her efforts to drive criminals out of her community.

And in perhaps one of the most heart-breaking incidences: Four years ago, drug dealers in East Baltimore firebombed the Dawson family home in an attempt to silence them—killing mother, father, and their five young children.

Make no mistake, Madam Speaker: Witness intimidation in Baltimore City is not dreamt up by producers of HBO’s critically acclaimed drama “The Wire.” The threat is real—and the reality is horrific.

To be sure, criminals in Baltimore City produced their own DVD in 2004 entitled “Stop the Snitching.” It depicts grotesque images of three bullet-ridden, bloody corpses accompanied by the phrase “snitch prevention.”

Sadly, my hometown of Baltimore is not the only community plagued by this horrific reality. The problem is pervasive.

The National Institute of Justice finds that intimidation of victims and witnesses is a major problem for 51 percent of prosecutors in large jurisdictions (counties with populations greater than 250,000) and 43 percent of prosecutors in small jurisdictions (counties with populations between 50,000 and 250,000).

Further, prosecutors estimate that witness intimidation occurs in up to 75 to 100 percent of the violent crimes committed in some gang-dominated neighborhoods.

Violent retaliation against witnesses and informers threatens the very fabric of our criminal justice system. Known murderers walk the streets every day because we lack the evidence necessary to bring them to justice.

Thankfully, witness protection programs can provide law enforcement with an indispensable tool in combating crime and addressing witness intimidation.

The Federal Witness Security Program, established in 1970 and administered by the Department of Justice, has successfully carried out its charge to protect witnesses testifying in extremely serious Federal cases.

Under the program, the United States Marshals Service (USMS) provides witnesses and their families with long-term protection, relocation, new identities, housing, employment, medical treatment, and funds to cover their most essential needs.

In over 30 years, not a single witness that followed security procedures was harmed while being protected by the program. More to the point, cases involving the testimony of the WSP participants have an 89 percent conviction rate.

In contrast, State witness protection programs are severely under-funded and enjoy virtually no Federal support.

While non-Federal witnesses can participate in the federal program under certain conditions, States are required to reimburse the Federal Government for the cost of providing such protection unless a waiver is granted.

As a result, State and local prosecutors often must choose between funding investigations or funding costly, but necessary witness protection programs. This often leads to some jurisdictions providing no witness protection at all.

No one wins when law enforcement officials are forced to make such choices.

That is why I am reintroducing the “Witness Security and Protection Act of 2007.” Senator CHUCK SCHUMER of New York has reintroduced a companion bill to this legislation in the Senate, S. 79. It also enjoys the support of the National District Attorneys Association.

The “Witness Security and Protection Act of 2007” would establish within the USMS a Short-Term State Witness Protection Program tailored to meet the needs of witnesses testifying in State and local trials involving homicide, a serious violent felony or a serious drug offense.

The Act would also authorize \$90 million per year in competitive grants for the next 3 years. State and local district attorneys and the U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, can use these funds to provide witness protection or pay the cost of enrolling their witnesses in the Short-Term State Witness Protection Program within the USMS.

Grants under this legislation would only be awarded to prosecutors in States with high homicide rates to ensure we target those most in need of Federal support.

Improving protection for State and local witnesses will move us one step closer toward alleviating the fears of and threats to prospective witnesses, and help to safeguard our communities from violence.

While we cannot bring back all those who suffered in the face of witness intimidation, we can honor their sacrifice by trying to prevent future tragedies.

I urge my colleagues to join me in taking that critical step by cosponsoring the “Witness Security and Protection Act of 2007.”

HONORING THE LIFE OF JUAN DESOSA

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 8, 2007

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary life and accomplishments of Mr. Juan Desosa.

Juan was born in Havana, Cuba, on February 10, 1927. His family was involved in the sugar and newspaper business, and he and his five siblings lived a happy life until 1959, when communist revolutionaries led by Fidel Castro took everything away from them. At that time, Juan made a life altering decision to leave his homeland and family and escape Cuba for freedom.

In 1960, Juan left Cuba and successfully made it to Miami, Florida. Not forgetting his homeland and the suffering of those he left behind, he worked to do everything in his power to help those that were not as lucky as he was. It was in Miami that Juan heard talk of a plan to liberate Cuba, and he soon found himself in the mountains of Guatemala with other Cuban refugees secretly training for an invasion. It was these refugees who later became the would-be liberators of the Bay of Pigs invasion. Juan fought fiercely for as long as he could, but was ultimately captured by Castro's soldiers. He suffered unimaginable conditions in a Cuban concentration camp for 3 years. Only after an exchange of prisoners for dollars between the Kennedy and Castro governments, was Juan released.

True to his character, upon returning to the U.S., Juan did not settle into a life of comfort and ease, but wanted to serve the country that liberated him twice, providing him with the economic, political, and religious freedom that was stripped away from him from his home country. He joined the U.S. Army, and during his military service, he proudly became a U.S. citizen. After serving 10 years in the Army, during which he engaged in combat missions during the Vietnam war, Juan retired as a major.

He settled down with his wife in New Port Richey, Florida, where he raised six children. Along the way, Juan has been recognized as an extraordinary businessman in his community who has owned and operated many popular restaurants in Florida's Ninth Congressional District. Currently, he owns and manages Juan Black Bean Deli in New Port Richey, an establishment that serves one of the best Cuban sandwiches on Florida's west coast.

Madam Speaker, as my good friend, Juan Desosa celebrates his 80th birthday, he has much for which to be proud. The life he has lived, and continues to live, serves as an example to us. He has displayed an uncommon courage, valor, and patriotism combined with his love of God, family and community that has benefited not only his fellow countrymen whom he endeavored to liberate, but his fellow citizens in the United States of America for whose freedom and liberty he fought for as a member of the U.S. Army.

TRIBUTE TO UNI-CAPITOL WASHINGTON INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 8, 2007

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, as we listen to our constituents, grapple with their needs, speak out, legislate, and otherwise work to improve their lives and the life of our Nation, we take great pride in the ability of Congress and our system of government to inspire the world beyond our borders. But just as important as this inspiration is the recognition of what we all can learn from that world, from people who want to study, visit or otherwise immerse themselves in this great institution as a means towards better understanding the United States.

For the last 8 years, a unique international exchange has taken place here in Congress. Future leaders of Australia have participated in what's known as the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Program. Through this program each year, one dozen of Australia's best and brightest university students have been carefully matched to House and Senate offices for two-month full-time internships. These internships have enabled me and many of my colleagues to share our pride in the American republic while at the same time learning more firsthand about the Australian commonwealth, its people, its ideas, and our numerous shared values.

It is an understatement to say that Australia and the United States are close allies globally or that we merely have such similarities as vibrant democracies, free-enterprise economies, and diverse societies. We are in many ways close cousins with complex national histories. That is what these young Australians get to learn as they are welcomed here, and how we profit by their all-too-brief presence among us.

This year, it has been my pleasure to participate in this program for the third time and host Sylvia Gaston from the University of Melbourne.

Her kindness, can-do spirit, eagerness to learn, and willingness to share her views with me and my staff have made her an exceptional ambassador for her university and for her country. During her time with us, the closeness of the Australian and American peoples is clearly evident, just as it is evident that this exchange is not merely an academic exercise or even confined to Congress. It is about building for tomorrow, about personal and professional growth, and about lasting international friendships.

Sylvia is not alone in this experience in the First Session of the 110th Congress. Joining her in this very bipartisan effort: Emmanuel Rohan in the office of Representative MIKE CASTLE; Charis Tierney in the office of Senator MIKE CRAPO; Nicole Woodmansey in the office of Senator CHRISTOPHER DODD; Clare Ashby in the office of Representative PHILIP ENGLISH; Anna Keenan in the office of Representative SAM FARR; Nisha Sundaresan in the office of Senator CHUCK HAGEL; Anu Ambikaipalan in the office of Representative ALCEE HASTINGS; Megan Bainbridge in the office of Representative JERROLD NADLER; Stuart Broadfoot in the office of Representative ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN; Jennifer Grant in the office of Representative LORETTA SANCHEZ; and, Michael Ng at House

Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (Majority).

Both the U.S. and Australian Governments have been strong supporters of this exchange over the years, and rightly so. Seven Australian universities currently participate in the program from 4 of the 6 Australian states and the Australian Capital Territory. Students are put forward from such diverse disciplines as economics, commerce, trade, science, law, communications, politics, and of course, American studies.

One of the more noteworthy aspects of the program is that it is an entirely pro bono project. Eric Federing, who served as a senior staffer in the House and Senate for a dozen years in the 1980s and 1990s, created the program 8 years ago soon after going to work for the auditing firm KPMG. What the effort almost completely lacks in bureaucracy, it makes up for in the personal trust, practical purpose and contagious enthusiasm that gave life to this highly-personalized vision of international exchange, which followed Eric's many travels to Australia in the 1990s while still on congressional staff.

Madam Speaker, many of my colleagues have recognized this effort over the years. I did so myself 4 years ago when the annual intern group was much smaller and drawn from only a single Australian university. It is heartening to see how much this program has grown, thrived, and how tribute has been paid not just here but in the Australian Parliament.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, there is so much we can learn when we connect people, whether here at home or around the world. Technology has greatly reduced what the Australians would call the “Tyranny of Distance.” But only when you meet with and sit down with someone from another city, another state, or another country can you fully understand and appreciate the world through their eyes and divine where common ground can be found and endure.

My great hope is not only that this program continues, but that others will be founded in its spirit and focused towards as many peoples and places as possible in our world.

SUPPORT OF H.R. 365, METHAMPHETAMINE REMEDIATION RESEARCH ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 365, the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007. As a member of the Congressional Caucus to Fight and Control Methamphetamine, I am proud to be a sponsor of H.R. 365, which will help combat the scourge of methamphetamines and ameliorate the serious problems it is causing our Nation.

First and foremost, H.R. 365 will require the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop health-related guidelines for the cleanup of methamphetamines. It will also call for the National Academy of Science to perform a study on the long-term health effects on children rescued from living in methamphetamine lab homes. In addition, NIST, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, will establish a research program to develop field