

[DRAFT] March 2, 2018

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The Honorable Alex M. Azar II
Secretary, The Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar,

On behalf of the Presidential Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria (PACCARB), we would like to congratulate you on your new post. With your support, we are eager to continue fulfilling our mission to address one of the foremost public health emergencies facing our nation and the international community, antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections in humans and animals.

As with other biological threats posing national security, health, and economic concerns, the danger posed by antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections is high, but carries an even greater probability for future harm with far-reaching, short- and long-term, domestic and international implications. Morbidity and mortality resulting from such infections is already prevalent in the U.S. and growing. **Therefore, the Federal efforts to address antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections must be included as part of the Department’s all-hazards approach to protecting our nation and in legislation to be maintained as a priority.**

The PACCARB, along with other Federal efforts to combat antibiotic-resistant bacteria (CARB), were included in Executive Order 13676 in 2014. Since our establishment in 2015, PACCARB has worked closely with our Federal partners in collaboration with external stakeholders to evaluate and recommend policy actions that will facilitate the Federal implementation of milestones consistent with the White House National Action Plan on CARB. With the Department’s support and the strong dedication of our members thus far, we have successfully produced two influential reports in just two years.¹ Furthermore, the PACCARB’s uniquely diverse membership composition allows us to utilize a One Health approach emphasizing the integration of human, animal, and environmental domains in all of our recommendations. We also serve as a national platform for the interdisciplinary partnership of external and Federal stakeholders committed to combating antibiotic resistance. These cooperative efforts to bring scientific and technical expertise to the problem need to be supported by Federal laws to ensure long-term continuity because the challenges of antibiotic resistance will persist.

The PACCARB has made substantial progress since 2015 and we are committed to continue our important work and influence well beyond 2020. **Although initiated through Executive Order, we unanimously recommend that the PACCARB be codified into law to sustain the One Health partnerships formed and continue its mission to produce reports and recommendations that influence federal CARB-related activities, both domestic and abroad.**

We look forward to another productive year and remain diligent in providing you, and the President, with our recommendations on how to address the growing biological security threat of antibiotic resistance in humans and animals.

Regards,

¹ All PACCARB reports can be viewed by visiting: <https://www.hhs.gov/ash/advisory-committees/paccarb/reports-and-recommendations/index.html>

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