



111 Michigan Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20010-2970

July 18, 2011

The Honorable Phil Gingrey
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Dr. Gingrey:

I am writing on behalf of Children's National Medical Center in Washington, DC, to commend you and your colleagues for addressing a public health issue of great importance to our children's hospital and the children and families we serve. Children's National Medical Center is pleased to support H.R. 2182, the Generating Antibiotic Incentives Now (GAIN) Act of 2011. Antibiotic resistance is a major problem at our hospital as it is in hospitals across the country. Our infectious disease specialists estimate that one out of every four children they treat has an infection that is resistant to one or more antibiotics.

The GAIN Act focuses on stimulating the development of desperately needed new antibiotics to treat life-threatening, multi-drug resistant infections. One of the challenges with antimicrobial drug development is that these aren't blockbuster, billion dollar drugs. Antibiotics tend not to be used on a daily basis by patients over the course of many years, like diabetes or cholesterol-lowering drugs, so incentives like those provided for in the GAIN Act seek to level the economic playing field.

Antibiotics are the foundation of much of modern healthcare, and any one of us could become the victim of an antibiotic resistant infection. But our nation's most vulnerable citizens – our children – are at even greater risk. Children's vulnerability to methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is just one clear example. The rates of MRSA infection in U.S. neonatal intensive care units (NICU) increased 300% from 1995 – 2004. A four year retrospective study of patients in our NICU found that MRSA infections increased the average length of stay by 40 days and were associated with more than \$160,000 of extra costs per patient.

Antibiotic resistant infections cost both lives and money. Serious drug-resistant bugs are emerging at a pace that far exceeds our development of new antibiotics. The time and money it takes to develop effective new antibiotics is great, but the ability of those antibiotics to generate revenue is limited. On behalf of the children and families we serve, we applaud your efforts to address this imbalance through the GAIN Act.

Sincerely,

Peter Holbrook, MD
Interim President & CEO
Chief Medical Officer