



National Military and Veterans Alliance

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Dear Senators / Representatives:

On behalf of the National Military and Veterans Alliance, a nonpartisan policy and advocacy organization composed of military associations and veterans organizations, we are writing to urge you to co-sponsor S. 185, the Promise for Antibiotics and Therapeutics for Health (PATH) Act, which was introduced this Congress by Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Michael Bennet (D-CO). This bipartisan legislation would establish a limited population approval pathway to bring much-needed antibiotics to patients with serious or life-threatening infections and few or no other options.

Antibiotic-resistant bacteria are infecting our military, veterans and fellow citizens at an alarming rate, and in far too many cases, we do not have the drugs to treat them. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that two million infections with antibiotic-resistant bacteria occur each year in the United States and 23,000 Americans die as a result.

These dangerous bacteria pose a particular threat to the military. Soldiers who once died from their battlefield wounds are now surviving those injuries but are succumbing to potentially lethal, drug-resistant infections. In fact, more than a third of wounded warriors injured in Iraq and Afghanistan developed a bacterial or fungal infection, according to the Department of Defense.

Unfortunately, the pace of development of new antibiotics to fight these superbugs lags far behind the pace of the development of the resistance that makes them so dangerous.

Antibiotic resistance presents a growing threat. Without new antibiotics that combat these bacteria, routine infections eventually could become life-threatening.

The PATH Act is necessary to open new pathways to bring antibiotics to people who desperately need them. It directs the Food and Drug Administration to approve new antibiotics on a more limited, smaller study than other antibiotics to reach patients more quickly and save lives.

The PATH Act also provides several important safeguards. It requires a drug's label to include special designation from FDA indicating that the drug is intended for use only in a limited, high-risk population. It also requires that the Department of Health and Human Services monitor how these approved antibiotics are being used to preserve effectiveness and safety.

Too many of our service members have died already because of untreatable superbugs. Without swift action, we are deeply concerned that needed drugs will not be developed to prevent the same fate. The PATH Act is an important step in the effort to ensure that physicians have the tools they need to combat antibiotic resistant infections in our soldiers, veterans and civilians. We respectfully urge passage of this critical act.

Sincerely,

American Logistics Association
American Military Retirees Association
American Military Society
American Retirees Association
Army Navy Union
Korean War Veterans Foundation
Military Order of Foreign Wars
Military Order Purple Heart
National Association for Uniformed Services
National Defense Committee
The Flag and General Officers' Network
The Retired Enlisted Association
Vietnam Veterans of America