

September 17, 2014

The Honorable Peter Roskam
227 Cannon House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Danny Davis
2159 Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Roskam and Davis:

The UPMC Center for Health Security wishes to express support for H.R. 4187, the Developing an Innovative Strategy for Antimicrobial Resistant Microorganisms (DISARM) Act.

Antimicrobial resistance, which began with the dawn of the antibiotic age, has risen to the point that it now represents a public health crisis that threatens the practice of modern medicine.

The market for novel antimicrobials is complicated by myriad factors that include:

- A relatively small proportion of individuals contract drug-resistant infections (when compared to those with, for example, coronary artery disease), making clinical trial design challenging
- Antimicrobial stewardship principles counsel against using a novel antimicrobial to minimize the development of resistance
- The relatively short time span an individual is prescribed an antibiotic (vs. lifetime prescriptions for chronic conditions, e.g., cholesterol-lowering medications)

In this precarious scenario, antibiotic development has stalled while resistance has increased.

The DISARM Act, by creating a new supplemental payment for certain antimicrobial drugs through the Medicare New Technology Add-on Payment (NTAP) program, will incentivize the development of novel antimicrobials. As the private healthcare market responds actively to Medicare payment policy, the changes the DISARM Act makes can have an outsized impact to reinvigorate this vital industry and spur the development of desperately needed, novel antibiotics.

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The Honorable Danny Davis
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Your DISARM Act has the potential to attract renewed research and development and help jump start the stalled out pathway for novel antimicrobial therapies that the public health badly requires. We applaud your commitment to reversing the alarming trend of antimicrobial resistance with this important legislation, and we look forward to working with you to solve this problem.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Inglesby". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tom" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Inglesby".

Tom Inglesby, MD
CEO & Director, UPMC Center for Health Security
Associate Professor of Medicine and Public Health, University of Pittsburgh