

IDSA Press Release STAAR Act

The Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) applauds Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) for reintroducing the Strategies to Address Antimicrobial Resistance (STAAR) Act to provide urgently needed federal leadership to tackle this growing public health crisis. The recent landmark Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report, “Antibiotic Resistance Threats in the United States, 2013,” underscores the need for this legislation.

“Antibiotic resistance is a deadly and severe threat in need of a coordinated, multi-pronged strategy to save lives. The STAAR Act includes many of the action steps needed to ensure that our federal response to this crisis is robust and effective,” said IDSA President Barbara Murray, MD, FIDSA.

The STAAR Act provides stronger federal leadership to coordinate activities that address resistance and strengthen accountability to ensure progress is made. In addition, the STAAR Act provides direction and authority for the federal government to combat antimicrobial resistance by building upon existing programs to promote prevention, track antibiotic use and resistance, improve antibiotic prescribing and support research.

Congress recognized the need to address antimicrobial resistance and the lack of new antimicrobial drugs by providing incentives to stimulate the development of new antimicrobials in the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act (FDASIA), which became law in 2012. The STAAR Act would complement FDASIA by enhancing efforts to combat the development of resistance and spread of resistant infections.

“It is critical that Congress protect its investment in the development of desperately needed new antimicrobials by enacting the STAAR Act, which will strengthen the federal response to antimicrobial resistance through enhanced leadership, surveillance, research and data collection,” said Steven Schmitt, MD, IDSA Board member and vice chair of the Medicine Institute at Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, Ohio. “Importantly, the STAAR Act will help ensure that new drugs do not immediately become obsolete by improving antimicrobial stewardship efforts to preserve the effectiveness of these lifesaving medications for patients who need them,” he continued.

“Each year more than 23,000 Americans die from bacterial infections that are resistant to antibiotics,” Senator Brown said. “Antibiotics and other antimicrobial drugs have been a victim of their own success. We have used these drugs so widely and for so long that the microbes they are designed to kill have adapted to them, making the drugs less effective. We need a comprehensive strategy to address antimicrobial resistance. That is why I am reintroducing the Strategies to Address Antimicrobial Resistance Act, which would revitalize federal efforts to combat superbugs.”

For more information on IDSA’s efforts to combat antimicrobial resistance and the *10 x ’20 Initiative*, visit www.antibioticsnow.org.