

Coalition for Animal Health

Dear (Member of Congress):

We are writing in support of timely action on the reauthorization of the Animal Drug User Fee Act (ADUFA). As a community of livestock producers, companion animal care providers, veterinarians and medicine manufacturers, we strongly urge your support of this critical legislation.

Modeled after the successful Prescription Drug User Fee Act, ADUFA was enacted in 2003 to provide additional resources for the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM), enabling the agency to conduct more timely reviews of new animal health drugs. ADUFA established performance goals for CVM in exchange for base funds of \$43 million over five years. This helped eliminate the extensive backlog of medicine submissions, so the agency could better meet animal health needs.

An effective and efficient animal drug approval process is essential, both to the health and well-being of animals and to overall public health. The long-recognized threats of zoonotic diseases, such as food borne bacteria that can cause illness in people, demonstrate that the need to protect public health by protecting animal health has never been more important. An efficient review process allows for the availability of new and innovative products to meet these challenges. It also encourages animal health companies to continue investing in the research and development of new products. Those investments, spread across research facilities in 44 states, totaled \$664 million in 2006.

Food safety starts at the farm where protecting the health of animals contributes to the safety of meat and milk for consumers. While livestock and poultry producers have adopted extensive systems and techniques to prevent animal disease outbreaks, medicines remain a vital tool in the health care management system. One of the chief goals of any production system is the protection of animal health in order to provide consumers with the safest possible product. Over the past several years, studies have demonstrated how maintaining animal health contributes to the safety of our food supply.

Animal medicines approved by the FDA also allow companion animals to live longer and healthier lives. Treatments for cancer and arthritis are examples of drugs that make our companion animals more comfortable as they grow older, providing owners additional years of enjoyment and companionship. As people live in closer proximity to their companion animals, the availability of medicines to keep animals healthy is important to keeping humans healthy.

CVM and the animal health industry have agreed on a reauthorization proposal that provides \$98 million in fees over the next five years and specifies timelines and improvements to ensure timely decisions on an animal medicine submission. Providing an effective array of medicines takes not only research and development, but a rigorous and timely regulatory review process.

The animal drug review process at the FDA is a stringent, science-based process that protects public health by making safe and effective animal health products available on a timely basis. The additional resources provided by this legislation will strengthen the agency and enhance CVM's ability to meet its public health and animal health mandates.

Help us protect public health by protecting animal health. Please support quick reauthorization of the Animal Drug User Fee Act in 2008.

Sincerely,

American Animal Hospital Association
American Association of Bovine Practitioners
American Association of Swine Veterinarians
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Horse Council
American Pet Products Manufacturers Association
American Sheep Industry Association
American Veterinary Medical Association
Animal Health Institute
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
National Chicken Council
National Milk Producers Federation
National Pork Producers Council
National Turkey Federation
Pet Food Institute