December 7, 2015

The Honorable President Barack H. Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Re: Message from Stakeholders Urging Finalization and Release of CARB Economic Incentives Working Group Recommendations

Dear Mr. President,

We, the undersigned organizations representing medicine, public health, industry, and patients, are deeply concerned about the alarming rise of antimicrobial resistance and the decreasing availability of effective therapies to treat antibiotic-resistant infections. More and more patients are contracting serious and even deadly infections that are difficult and sometimes impossible to treat, resulting in longer hospital stays, complications of other medical treatments such as surgery or chemotherapy, and even deaths. Patients with weakened immune systems, such as those with HIV/AIDS, preterm infants, cancer patients, transplant patients, the elderly, or patients treated in intensive care units are at heightened risk, but even healthy young people are contracting and dying from resistant infections.

We therefore welcomed the National Action Plan for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria (CARB Action Plan), including the announcement that a CARB Economic Incentives Working Group (EIWG) had been convened to analyze potential economic incentives to attract more private investment in the development of antibiotics and other innovative products to prevent, diagnose and treat resistant infections and slow the emergence of resistance. As we understand, several U.S. agencies involved with the EIWG have been working over the past few months to prepare recommendations to the President.

We urge you to quickly finalize and release the report publicly so that stakeholders can have an opportunity to review the recommendations and provide input. If there is no plan to release the report, we request confirmation from the White House along with an explanation about why this aspect of the CARB Action Plan will remain unfulfilled.

In its September 2014 report, the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) acknowledged that the 2011 Generating Antibiotic Incentives Now (GAIN) Act was a good first step but that additional “push” and “pull” mechanisms are necessary to spur antibiotic development. We agree that economic incentives are critical to ensuring there is a diverse and robust pipeline of antibiotics and other novel products, and that better efforts are necessary to preserve the effectiveness of both existing and novel therapies so that they continue to benefit patients in the future. We are very interested to see the EIWG’s analysis of PCAST’s recommendations and other proposals, including the idea of R&D tax credits for companies pursuing qualified drugs, biologics and diagnostics to stem resistance.

We are encouraged that White House staff is moving forward with other commitments in the CARB plan and we eagerly await recommendations from the EIWG.

We would greatly appreciate an update on the progress of the EIWG report and an expected release date, if any. Please direct any responses or questions to John Billington at jbillington@idsociety.org.
Sincerely,

AdvaMedDx
Alliance for Aging Research
Alliance for the Prudent Use of Antibiotics
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of Bovine Practitioners
American College of Rheumatology
American Thoracic Society
American Urological Association
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Center for Foodborne Illness Research & Prevention
Da Volterra
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Making-A-Difference in Infectious Diseases (MAD-ID)
March of Dimes
Merck & Co.
Michigan Antibiotic Resistance Reduction Coalition
National Association of County and City Health Officials
NovaDigm Therapeutics, Inc.
HIV Medicine Association
Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society
The Pew Charitable Trusts
Renal Physicians Association
Research!America
Society of Critical Care Medicine
Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America
Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists
Trust for America’s Health
UPMC Center for Health Security

Cc:

Susan Coller-Monarez, PhD
White House Office of Science and Technology Policy

Lawrence Kerr, PhD
White House National Security Staff