

our national security. I plan on giving two more speeches highlighting the Commission's findings, followed by a resolution to effect their conclusions. I hope America is listening.

It is so similar to what we are facing right now and what we voted on, the fact that the European Union is subsidizing a company which would undermine the aerospace industry here in the United States. At the same time, if the European Union lifts the sanctions which they have right now, they would be doing essentially the same thing to our country.

I yield the floor.

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, on April 6, 2005, I was unable to cast a vote on amendment No. 286 to S. 600. This was due to an unavoidable medical procedure that requires me to commute daily to Baltimore. Had I been there, I would have voted "nay."

#### ANTIBIOTICS FOR HUMAN TREATMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, it is a privilege to join my distinguished colleagues, in proposing The Preservation of Antibiotics for Human Treatment Act of 2005. Our goal in this important initiative is to take needed action to preserve the effectiveness of antibiotics in treating diseases.

These drugs are truly a modern medical miracle. During World War II, the newly developed "wonder drug" penicillin revolutionized the care for our soldiers wounded in battle. Since then, they have become indispensable in modern medicine, protecting all of us from deadly infections. They are even more valuable today, safeguarding the nation from the threat of bioterrorism. Unfortunately, over the past years, we have done too little to prevent the emergence of antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria and other germs, and many of our most powerful drugs are no longer effective.

Partly, the resistance is the result of the overprescribing of such drugs in routine medical care. But, mounting evidence also shows at the indiscriminate use of critical drugs in animal feed is also a major factor in the development of antibiotic resistant germs.

Obviously, if animals are sick, whether as pets or livestock, they should be treated with the best veterinary medications available. That is not a problem. The problem is the widespread practice of using antibiotics to promote growth and fatten healthy livestock. This nontherapeutic use clearly undermines the effectiveness of these important drugs because it leads to greater development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria that can make infections in humans difficult or impossible to treat.

In 1998—7 years ago—a report prepared at the request of the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug

Administration, by the National Academy of Sciences, concluded "there is a link between the use of antibiotics in food animals, the development of bacterial resistance to these drugs, and human disease." The World Health Organization has specifically recommended that antibiotics used to treat humans should not be used to promote animal growth, although they could still be used to treat sick animals.

In 2001, Federal interagency task force on antibiotic resistance concluded that "drug-resistant pathogens are a growing menace to all people, regardless of age, gender, or socio-economic background. If we do not act to address the problem . . . [d]rug choices for the treatment of common infections will become increasingly limited and expensive—and, in some cases, non-existent."

The Union of Concerned Scientists estimates that 70 percent of all U.S. antibiotics are used nontherapeutically in animal agriculture—eight times more than in are used in all of human medicine. This indiscriminate use clearly reduces their potency.

Major medical associations have been increasingly concerned and taken strong stands against antibiotic use in animal agriculture. In June 2001, the American Medical Association adopted a resolution opposing nontherapeutic use of antibiotics in animals. Other professional medical organizations that have taken a similar stands include the American College of Preventive Medicine, the American Public Health Association, and the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists. The legislation we are offering has been strongly endorsed by the American Public Health Association and numerous other groups and independent experts in the field.

Ending this detrimental practice is feasible and cost-effective. In fact, most of the developed countries in the world, except for the United States and Canada, already restrict the use of antibiotics to promote growth in raising livestock. In 1999, the European Union banned such use and money saved on drugs has been invested in improving hygiene and animal husbandry practices. Researchers in Denmark found a dramatic decline in the number of drug-resistant organisms in animals—and no significant increase in animal diseases or in consumer prices.

These results have encouraged clinicians and researchers to call for a similar ban in the United States. The title of an editorial in the *New England Journal of Medicine* 4 years ago said it all: "Antimicrobial Use in Animal Feed—Time to Stop."

On Thursday, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Public Health Association, Environmental Defense, the Food Animal Concerns Trust, and the Union of Concerned Scientists joined together in filing a formal petition with FDA calling for the withdrawal of certain classes of drugs from animal feed.

Earlier last week, Acting FDA Commissioner Lester Crawford emphasized his own concern that the use of such drugs in food-producing animals has an adverse health impact on humans. He stated that the FDA agrees with the GAO recommendation to review approved animal drugs that are critical to human health, and described FDA's progress in doing so. He stated, however, that the review process is extremely slow and labor intensive, and that even when safety issues are identified, the FDA can do little more than hope that the animal pharmaceutical companies will cooperate in addressing the issue.

There is no question that the Nation stands at risk of an epidemic outbreak of food poisoning caused by drug-resistant bacteria or other germs. It is time to put public safety first and stop the abuse of drugs critical to human health.

The bill we propose will phase out the nontherapeutic use in livestock of medically important antibiotics, unless manufacturers can show such use is no danger to public health. The act requires applying this same strict standard to applications for approval of new animal antibiotics. Treatment is not restricted if the animals are sick or are pets or other animals not used for food. In addition, FDA is given the authority to restrict the use of important drugs in animals, if the risk to humans is in question.

According to the National Academy of Sciences, eliminating the use of antibiotics as feed additives in agriculture would cost each American consumer not more than five to ten dollars a year. The legislation recognizes, however, economic costs to farmers in making the transition to antibiotic-free practices may be substantial. In such cases, the Act provides for federal payments to defray the cost of shifting to antibiotic-free practices, with preference for family farms.

Antibiotics are among the greatest miracles of modern medicine, yet we are destroying them faster than the pharmaceutical industry can create replacements. If doctors lose these critical remedies, the most vulnerable among us will suffer the most—children, the elderly, persons with HIV/AIDS, who are most in danger of resistant infections. I urge my colleagues to support this clearly needed legislation to protect the health of all Americans from this reckless and unjustified use of antibiotics.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, today we are facing a public health crisis which most of us certainly did not anticipate. Nearly a half century ago, following the development of modern antibiotics, Nobel Laureate Sir McFarland Burnet stated, "One can think of the middle of the twentieth century as the end of one of the most important social revolutions in history, the virtual elimination of infectious diseases as a significant factor in social life."

How things have changed. Today some of our most deadly health threats