

Dear Senate Committee on Health Care,

I am writing to express my support for SB 785. As you have heard, the growing resistance to antibiotics is a global crisis. While doctors overprescribing antibiotics is an issue, the overuse of antibiotics on farms is a massive contributor to the breeding of antibiotic resistant bacteria. This is a problem that affects everyone, but I want to share with you what this crisis means to me.

I have a chronic health condition which is characterized by my immune system attacking my own body; leading to bone and joint damage, arthritis, and eventually limited mobility. The only treatments for my disease are to take drugs which suppress my immune system, which makes me incredibly susceptible to sickness and especially infections.

On a Tuesday night the end of November 2016 I came down with a cold, and on Friday night my right ear suddenly started hurting so much that I went to urgent care. The doctor confirmed that I had an ear infection, and since I have a suppressed immune system agreed I would need antibiotics in order to safely treat it. However, my pharmacy was closed Friday nights, so I couldn't fill my prescription until the next morning. In the course of that Friday night my right eardrum ruptured, my left eardrum became infected, and by 8am on Saturday my left eardrum had ruptured as well.

Luckily, my antibiotics worked. But an untreated ear infection can kill you, and antibiotics are the most effective way to treat infections associated with my suppressed immune system. If antibiotics stop working, something as mundane as an ear infection could kill me. The routine use of antibiotics on farms is not necessary for raising livestock and poultry, but antibiotics are necessary for my health. I am begging you for the sake of myself, for other people with similar diseases- and even people with healthy immune systems, to address this issue now and to put our health and survival over the profits of the pharmaceutical system and agribusiness.

Sincerely,
Claire Duncan