



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB 516 – Agriculture –
Use of Antimicrobial Drugs – Reporting Deadlines**

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, Members of ENT:

In 2019 I sponsored successful legislation to clarify the law relating to the overuse of antibiotics in livestock. Antibiotics are an extremely important and effective form of treatment for many illnesses, preventing many deaths. However, the overuse of antibiotics leads to antibiotic resistant infections, severe illnesses and even death.

The 2019 legislation (HB 652) included a reporting section so that we would have a better sense of the amount of antibiotics prescribed to livestock in Maryland. Unfortunately, the due date of the report – February 1 – has caused problems.

First, the veterinarians have until January 31st to submit their information to the Department. The Department then must submit the report the next day. This is a difficult turnaround under the best of circumstances, even more so if a veterinarian submits reports at 11:30pm (which has happened), causing employees to have to redo the entire report, including graphs and recalculating all of the percentages throughout the report.

Second, the report requires data on “Animals Raised on Farms.” However, that data isn’t complete until June. So the February report has data on the animals raised the previous year, but the antibiotics given in the current year for which they are reporting. Thus the report is supplying data from different years, making it unusable for the purpose that the legislation intended.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Committee give a favorable report to HB 516 and alter the reporting date to July 1.