LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION urging the New York State Congressional delegation to pass the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (PAMTA, H.R. 965/S.1211)

WHEREAS, H.R. 965/S.1211 would require the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to review the approvals previously issued for non-therapeutic uses of antibiotics in food-producing animals for seven classes of antibiotics in order to preserve the effectiveness of these medically important drugs used in the treatment of human and animal diseases; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, H.R. 965/S.1211 would require the withdrawal of approval of non-therapeutic use of such antibiotics for animals unless the Secretary of Agriculture can demonstrate within two years of passage of the Act that there is a reasonable certainty of no harm to human health due to the development of antibiotic resistance that is attributable to such use of these drugs; and

WHEREAS, Antibiotics are used in food animal production for treating sick animals, and for non-therapeutic purposes such as promoting animal growth, weight gain, efficient use of animal feed, and disease prevention; and

WHEREAS, The most significant factor in the spread of antibiotic resistant bacteria is overuse of antibiotics in human medicine and animal agriculture, especially the use of low dosages administered to a large number of animals over long periods of time; and

WHEREAS, When treating illness, antibiotics are often given to all animals in a group whether or not they are all at risk or are all sick; and

WHEREAS, Antibiotics provided to animals for growth promotion or prevention of illness are usually provided in low dosages for long duration, sometimes given for the entire production cycle of raising the animal; and

WHEREAS, While careful use of antibiotics for sick animals is important for animal and human health, research does not demonstrate significant increases in animal growth from the non-therapeutic use of antibiotics; and

WHEREAS, According to the FDA, 80 percent of the antibiotics produced, in the United States, are used in animal agriculture, for non-therapeutic purposes; and

WHEREAS, Antibiotic resistance linked to food animals is rising especially for antibiotics used for growth promotion and other non-therapeutic purposes; and

WHEREAS, Studies have suggested that food animals are often reservoirs of antibiotic resistant diseases commonly affecting humans such as blood infections and foodborne illnesses and these resistant infections may result in more severe and longer lasting illnesses; and

WHEREAS, Animals raised in large numbers in close confinement are more susceptible to the spread of diseases that may require treatment with antibiotics; and

WHEREAS, Changes in animal housing and living conditions along with improved veterinary treatment of sick animals could reduce or eliminate the need for widespread use of antibiotics for growth promotion and disease prevention; and

WHEREAS, Although some producers and retailers of meat products have developed policies that take steps to curb antibiotic use, private sector initiatives to reduce antibiotic use in animal agriculture are rare, limited in scope and difficult to verify; and

WHEREAS, Federal intervention is needed to achieve reductions in the unnecessary use of antibiotics in animals and subsequent development of disease resistance; and

WHEREAS, Approval of PAMTA will help protect antibiotics used for human health, and, encourage producers using antibiotics for non-therapeutic purposes to rely on alternative means to grow healthy animals; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the New York State Congressional delegation be and hereby is respectfully memorialized by this Legislative Body to pass the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (PAMTA, H.R. 965/S.1211); and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to each member of the Congressional delegation from the State of New York.