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SHAREHOLDERS TO PRESS MCDONALD'S ON ANTIBIOTIC-FREE MEAT AT 5/26 ANNUAL MEETING

Citing dangers of growing antibiotic resistance and increasing consumer demand for sustainable meat, investors look for shareholder support for a comprehensive policy that “phases out routine use of antibiotics”.

NEW YORK, NY – TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2016 – Members of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) and shareholders of McDonald's will be making the case for the company to comprehensively source meat products that have not been over-treated with antibiotics used in human health at the company's annual meeting this Thursday in Oak Brook, Illinois.

The resolution, number seven on the proxy ballot, calls for an expansion of the company's current policy regarding the sourcing of meats, to ensure that all its meat products, including beef and pork, have been raised without the routine use of antibiotics essential to human health; the current policy only covers chicken. The rationale for the proposal cites dangerous human antibiotic resistance, which has been on the increase ever since these drugs first began to be routinely used to prevent illness in animals living in cramped and unhealthy conditions, also known as “factory farms”.

The investors contend that this unnecessary use of antibiotics in McDonald's meat supply chain creates material risk for the company in the forms of impending antibiotics regulation, loss of market share and brand damage as other restaurant chains take proactive steps to respond to consumers' demands for antibiotic-free meat.

When McDonald's announced that it was updating its policy to procure chickens raised without antibiotics used to treat humans, the investors applauded the move as an important first step forward in ethical and sustainable sourcing and an acknowledgement that company management concedes the dangers over-exposure to antibiotics can have on public health. But, when the policy wasn't extended to cover beef and pork, mainstay meats in the restaurants' menus, they re-filed the resolution requesting that the antibiotics policy be expanded to include all meats.

Said Austin Wilson of As You Sow, ***“McDonald's brand identity is tied to sustainability and responsibility; the brand is damaged by the company's lack of progress on beef and pork antibiotics standards. We advocate detailed and comprehensive disclosure about how McDonald's will expand***

antibiotic use policies throughout its meat supply chain, given the emerging health crisis and industry trends.”

Importantly, the shareholder resolution has received the backing of proxy voting advisors ISS, a strong signal that these issues are considered significant and material to investors.

“Antibiotic resistance is a serious, global threat to human health,” said Lance B. Price, Ph.D., who is director of the [Antibiotic Resistance Action Center](#) at the Milken Institute School of Public Health at George Washington University. ***“Studies from around the world and dating back to the 1960s have demonstrated that antibiotic use in food-animal production breeds antibiotic-resistant bacteria that can ultimately end up in our bodies, food, air and water. We need to see major reductions in use in this sector if we hope to win the war against superbugs.”***

Reports from the World Health Organization, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the President’s Council on Science and Technology indicate that growing antibiotic resistance is a global public health crisis threatening to overturn many of the medical advances made over the last century. Antibiotic-resistant infections cause over 2 million human illnesses and at least 23,000 deaths each year in the U.S., costing society somewhere between \$55 and \$70 billion annually.

Said Sr. Susan Mika of the Congregation of Benedictine Sisters of Boerne, TX and lead filer of the proposal, ***“When it comes to food safety and sustainability, McDonald’s needs to accept the responsibility that comes along with being a major brand with the power to shape food trends. When the company announced its antibiotics-free chicken policy it made it clear it was in response to consumer demand. Why should its view on beef or pork be any different? We are looking for broad support of our resolution with McDonald’s shareholders and hope that management will revise its antibiotics policy as a result.”***

The investors also noted that McDonald’s should be commended on progress it is making on the sustainability front including a [commitment on deforestation](#) and more renewable, [fiber-based packaging](#).

About the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)

Celebrating its 45th year, ICCR is the pioneer coalition of shareholder advocates who view the management of their investments as a catalyst for change. Its 300 member organizations comprise faith communities, socially responsible asset managers, unions, pensions, NGOs and academic institutions representing combined assets of over \$100 billion with a record of corporate engagement that has demonstrated influence on corporate policies that further justice and sustainability. ICCR members engage hundreds of corporations annually in an effort to promote greater corporate accountability on questions such as climate change, corporate water stewardship, sustainable food production, human trafficking and slavery in global supply chains and increased access to both financial and health care services for communities in need. www.iccr.org

