

Prominent Maine United States Senator Meets with Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) Representatives – Posted One Health Initiative website, Friday, June 10, 2011



Left to right: Carol McCarthy, MD, Robert Smith, MD, MPH, Kathleen Gensheimer, MD, MPH, Senator Susan Collins (R ME), Rob Owens, PharmD

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Senator Susan Collins (R ME) visited with representatives of the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) <http://www.idsociety.org/> on Wednesday June 1, 2011. Physician, **Dr. Kathleen Gensheimer**, a prominent One Health supporter/advocate briefly discussed with **Senator Collins** the One Health concept and handed her a copy of a recent letter (please see <http://alturl.com/kv7y8>) sent to **Secretaries Kathleen Sebelius** (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) and **Janet Napolitano** (U.S. Department of Homeland Security) requesting assistance with crucial funding for a comprehensive “One Health” Institute of Medicine (IOM)/National Research Council Study/Report.

In addition **Dr. Gensheimer** gave the Senator a copy of the response (please see

<http://www.onehealthinitiative.com/publications/img053.pdf>) from **Alexander G. Garza, MD, MPH**, the Department of Homeland Security's Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs and Chief Medical Officer. **Dr. Garza** expressed the Department's strong support for implementation of the One Health concept.

Senator Collins reportedly "was very involved and engaged, well informed on the issues and asked key pertinent questions about all subjects discussed." **Dr. Gensheimer** said, "**Drs. McCarthy, Smith, Owens** and I primarily discussed antibiotic resistance and animal feeds with **Senator Collins** along with Methacillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA), *Clostridium difficile* and hospital acquired infections. We also reviewed the critical need to sustain public health infrastructure, particularly in regards to laboratory and disease surveillance capacity. We specifically addressed the vectorborne disease challenges in Maine but also made a plug for continued resources on a global basis, especially for HIV, TB and Malaria. **Senator Collins** was very supportive of our efforts to inform and educate. We greatly appreciated her gracious reception and courtesy extended to us."