

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 300 Session of
2007

INTRODUCED BY BENNINGTON, WAGNER, PARKER, KULA, MANN, JOSEPHS,
MUNDY, GEORGE, READSHAW, LEVDANSKY, LEACH, M. SMITH, SHAPIRO,
SIPTROTH, SHIMKUS, HARKINS, HARHAI, FRANKEL, FABRIZIO,
EACHUS, DERMODY, DePASQUALE, HORNAMAN, FREEMAN, KOTIK,
PRESTON, M. O'BRIEN, SANTONI, VITALI, WHEATLEY, J. WHITE,
WALKO, MELIO, MARKOSEK, DeLUCA AND CURRY, MAY 29, 2007

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, MAY 29, 2007

A RESOLUTION

1 Petitioning the Congress of the United States to ban the use of
2 organic or inorganic arsenic and arsenic derivatives in
3 poultry feed.

4 WHEREAS, Roxarsone, an organoarsenical, has been Food and
5 Drug Administration (FDA) approved for poultry feed since 1944;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, Organoarsenicals have many names, such as arsonic
8 acid, arsanilic acid, arsenilic acid and nitarsonsone, among
9 others; and

10 WHEREAS, Organoarsenicals are used as an additive in the feed
11 of 70% of the chicken roasters raised nationally to control
12 protozoan parasites known as coccidians; and

13 WHEREAS, There are several coccidia vaccines now in use; and

14 WHEREAS, Ninety-five percent of the organic arsenic additive
15 is excreted unchanged in chicken waste, and approximately 90% of
16 this litter is disposed of through land application; and

1 WHEREAS, Poultry litter can be a valuable soil amendment and
2 is often composted or used as a fertilizer in normal
3 agricultural practices; and

4 WHEREAS, The poultry industry processes and sells poultry
5 waste as garden fertilizer for consumers to use in home gardens
6 and lawns; and

7 WHEREAS, Many people in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania get
8 their drinking water from groundwater; and

9 WHEREAS, A peer-reviewed study entitled "Anaerobic
10 Biotransformation of Roxarsone and Related N-Substituted
11 Phenylarsonic Acids," published in the February 2006 issue of
12 "Environmental Science & Technology," found that roxarsone can
13 be transformed under anaerobic conditions to produce the toxic
14 arsenic species arsenite; and

15 WHEREAS, A peer-reviewed study by scientists at Duquesne
16 University entitled "Biotransformation of 3-Nitro-4-
17 hydroxybenzene Arsonic Acid (Roxarsone) and Release of Inorganic
18 Arsenic by Clostridium Species," published in the January 2007
19 issue of "Environmental Science & Technology," found that
20 roxarsone converts quickly into inorganic arsenic under
21 conditions in which Clostridium bacteria are present; and

22 WHEREAS, Conditions typically associated with normal
23 agricultural practices provide the conditions necessary for
24 Clostridium to be present; and

25 WHEREAS, Inorganic arsenic in drinking water and soil has
26 been found to be dangerous to human health; and

27 WHEREAS, Arsenic has been linked to bladder, lung, skin,
28 kidney and colon cancer, while low-level exposures can lead to
29 partial paralysis and diabetes; and

30 WHEREAS, The FDA's regulatory responsibility is to ensure

1 that the use of arsenical additives as a feed amendment is safe
2 for chickens; and

3 WHEREAS, The FDA's regulatory responsibility is to ensure
4 that the residues in edible chicken tissue have no adverse
5 health effects in humans because of the use of arsenical
6 additives in poultry feed; and

7 WHEREAS, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), whose
8 regulatory responsibility is to regulate drinking water,
9 considers arsenic to be a class A carcinogen and has set a limit
10 on the amount of arsenic allowed in fertilizer applied to
11 agricultural land; and

12 WHEREAS, The United States Geological Survey (USGS) has been
13 mapping and analyzing arsenic concentrations in soils and
14 waters; and

15 WHEREAS, Federal organic agricultural standards do not allow
16 poultry feed to include arsenic derivatives, but they do allow
17 poultry waste land applications to include arsenic up to a
18 certain level; and

19 WHEREAS, The European Union banned the use of roxarsone in
20 1999; and

21 WHEREAS, Some of the largest companies in the poultry
22 industry, including Tyson Foods, stopped using compounds
23 containing arsenic in July 2004; and

24 WHEREAS, Banning the poultry industry's use of roxarsone is
25 an easy way to prevent arsenic from entering the food chain and
26 drinking water supply; therefore be it

27 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
28 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania petition the Congress of the United
29 States to ban the use of organic or inorganic arsenic and
30 arsenic derivatives in poultry feed; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to
2 the presiding officers of each house of Congress and to each
3 member of Congress from Pennsylvania.