

News from the

**U.S. Senate Committee on
Health, Education, Labor and Pensions**

Michael B. Enzi (Wyoming), Chairman



**For Immediate Release
Contact: Craig Orfield 202.224.6770
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***ENZI-NELSON SMALL BUSINESS HEALTH BILL WOULD CUT
INSURANCE COSTS BY 12 PERCENT, ADD 900,000 TO INSURED***

Washington, D.C. – An independent analysis of S.1955, “The Health Insurance Marketplace Modernization and Affordability Act,” has found that the bill would reduce health insurance premiums for all small employers and trim the ranks of the nation’s working uninsured by 8 percent or 900,000 people, U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, confirmed today on the eve of the bill’s markup.

The study, prepared by the Milwaukee firm of Mercer Oliver Wyman, Inc. for the National Small Business Association, was released today. Modeling by the firm, which assumed passage and enactment of the bill into law, forecasts the plan introduced by Enzi, Senator Ben Nelson (D-NE) and Senator Conrad Burns (R-MT) “will alleviate some of the health insurance cost pressures faced by small employers.” The report can be viewed by visiting http://ww.nsba.biz/docs/2006_mercer_report.pdf

“After a decade of gridlock and no real chance to pass genuine health insurance reform through the Senate, this bill is a light at the end of the tunnel for small business and working families,” Enzi said. “The results of this review by respected experts strongly suggests it will make basic, affordable health insurance policies available to

small businesses, reduce their skyrocketing costs by \$1000 per employee, and cover one million more people. That's significant and deserves the Senate's support."

Senator Nelson said: "The Mercer Report confirms that our legislation achieves its stated goal of lowering costs to small businesses and expanding access to health insurance to more Americans. Access to basic, affordable health insurance is a national priority and our bill enables America's small businesses to offer health insurance that they couldn't offer otherwise." Nelson, is a former state insurance director and former executive vice president of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners.

The HELP Committee is scheduled to mark-up S.1955 tomorrow at 10 a.m. in 430 Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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