

News from the

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

Michael B. Enzi (Wyoming), Chairman



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***ENZI LEADS SENATORS, U.S. CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE, AND SMALL BUSINESS GROUPS
IN RALLY SUPPORTING S. 1955 AS HISTORIC VOTE NEARS***

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee today led Senators, representatives from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other small business organizations, and almost 300 small business owners and their employees in a rally supporting the Enzi-Nelson Small Business Health Plan (SBHP) bill, S. 1955, as it nears an historic vote in the Senate.

“We are nearing almost five years of double-digit growth in health insurance premiums – increases that have repeatedly exceeded more than five times the rate of inflation,” Enzi said. “This inflationary spiral is lowering the quality of life for countless families and hurting our economy. But those hardest hit are America’s small businesses and families outside of employer-provided insurance. Never before has there been a more urgent need for Small Business Health Plans.”

The Enzi-Nelson bill would allow small business associations to pool their members across state lines to leverage their combined purchasing power and negotiate more affordable insurance options. Actuaries project that it will lower health insurance premiums by 12 percent, and bring one million people into the insurance market.

“Our bill gives small business owners and working families the power to demand the health benefits they want and need, at prices they can afford,” Enzi said. “It gives them the same rights and benefits that large companies and unions already enjoy.”

As the Enzi-Nelson bill continues to be debated on the floor of the Senate, this rally gave those who will be affected most by its passage – small business owners and employees – the chance to voice their strong support for S. 1955 and to encourage their Senators to support it as well.

“Getting this important bill through the HELP Committee and to the Senate floor hasn’t been easy – but it reflects the burden America’s small businesses and working families endure every day in the struggle to find affordable health. It shouldn’t be that hard for working families and this bill will help ease that burden.”

The bill has broad support nationwide, with 93 percent of Republicans and 86 percent of Democrats supporting SBHP legislation. The National Federation of Independent Business recently delivered to Senator Enzi a petition in support of S. 1955 with almost 500,000 signatures.

The Senate will vote soon on the measure, and Enzi believes that the strong support of the American electorate and the bill’s obvious implications for improving the nation’s health care system secure its passage.

“I am an optimist. I believe that we had an honest and open debate, and people realize the enormous upside of this bill, and support it overwhelmingly.”

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