



For Immediate Release

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***ENZI WORKING TO FORGE NEW COMPROMISE,  
WIN NEEDED VOTES TO OVERCOME  
FILIBUSTER OF SMALL BUSINESS HEALTH PLAN BILL, S.1955***

**Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today told small business leaders that the Senate can still act this year to pass critical health insurance reforms and offer working families better access to coverage at more affordable rates through the Enzi-Nelson Small Business Health Plan (SBHP) bill, S.1955.

Enzi, speaking to members of the National Federation of Independent Business at the group's annual National Small-Business Summit, confirmed that he is working with Democrat senators to find ways to "compromise a bit" on coverage mandates in S.1955 and get the bill through the Senate. Last month, the bill fell just five votes short of the 60 needed to end a Democrat filibuster blocking a final vote.

"It's been said that half a loaf is better than none - but the opponents of Small Business Health Plans wouldn't even leave the crumbs, much less half a loaf for small business - when they blocked a final vote on the Enzi-Nelson bill," Enzi said.

"This is a good fight, and one I will continue fighting," he added. "You don't always get a good idea with strong support up and over the mountain that is the Senate the first time."

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. Independent actuaries project that it will lower health insurance premiums by 12 percent, and bring one million people into the insurance market.

The bill also gives small business owners and working families the power to demand the health benefits they want and need, at prices they can afford. It also gives

them the same bargaining power with insurers that large companies and unions already enjoy.

“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 insurance. 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 strength of small business was crucial in moving this debate forward. My colleagues and I felt your wind at our backs when we brought this important debate before the Senate floor for the first time,” Enzi told NFIB members. “If you keep making your voices heard, we can get this done – and get it done this year.”

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