



For Immediate Release

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ENZI PRAISES STRENGTH OF AMERICAN ECONOMY, ENCOURAGES FURTHER PROGRESS, AS COLLEGE GRADUATES ENTER BEST JOB MARKET IN FOUR YEARS

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today said a new survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), which shows that college graduates are entering the best job market in four years, highlights the strength and projected growth of the American economy, but also underscores the need to improve the education pipeline from high school to post-secondary education and the workplace.

“The American economy has grown stronger over the last several years, leading employers to increase hiring and raise wages and salaries,” Enzi said. “As a result, unemployment is at a five-year low, wages and benefits are up 3.3 percent over last year, and employers are hiring more graduates out of college at higher starting salaries. To ensure that the American economy can remain competitive in the years to come and that more Americans can reap the benefits of this economic strength, we must take steps to graduate more students on time and with the knowledge and skills to be successful in the 21st century workplace.”

According to the NACE survey, employers plan to hire 17.4 percent more new college graduates in 2006-2007 than in 2005-2006. They also intend to increase starting salaries by 4.6 percent over last year and to offer signing bonuses that average \$3,568.

“As we begin the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act, we must aggressively address the issue of rising high school dropout rates and improve the links between high school and college so that students graduate on time and ready to begin college-level work without needing remedial courses,” Enzi said “We must also reauthorize the Higher Education Act to make a college education more affordable and accessible, so that all Americans have the opportunity to take advantage of this robust job market,” Enzi said.

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