



For Immediate Release

Contact: Craig Orfield
(202) 224-6770

Thursday, March 29, 2007

***ENZI INTRODUCES RADIOLOGY CARE BILL TO IMPROVE
MEDICAL CARE, REDUCE COSTS***

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP Committee), today introduced the "Consistency, Accuracy, Responsibility and Excellence (CARE) in Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Act of 2007," a bill that will improve patient safety and health care quality by advancing uniform standards for medical imaging certification.

"For millions of Americans each year, the road to diagnosis, treatment, and healing begins in the radiology department," Enzi said. "The CARE bill will require national education standards for the professionals that perform medical imaging and radiation therapy to ensure that they are properly trained. This bill is vital to improving patient safety and health care quality."

Each year, between 4 percent and 7 percent of medical imaging examinations have to be repeated due to improper positioning or technique. This not only puts patient safety at risk due to the threat of overexposure to radiation, but it also costs Americans and the federal government a staggering amount in unnecessary health care bills. If the provisions of the CARE bill could reduce the number of repeat examinations nationally by just 1 percent, Medicare would save an estimated \$92 million a year.

"By establishing national education and credentialing standards, the CARE Bill will ensure that quality information is presented for diagnosis and that radiation treatments are delivered accurately and safely," Enzi said. "It will reduce the chance of misdiagnosis, additional testing, and needless patient anxiety."

"This bill will not only improve health care quality and save lives, it will also reduce costs and make radiologic care more affordable and accessible for patients in need."

Medical imaging is an invaluable tool in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of disease, but most radiologic procedures also carry a potential health risk. The CARE bill would reduce that risk and improve the safety of medical imaging by ensuring that procedures are carried out by well-trained, qualified professionals, and by requiring that the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS):

- Consult with recognized experts to establish standards to ensure the safety and accuracy of medical imaging studies and radiation therapy treatments;
- Require licensure for providers of technical services by each state;
- Provide flexible means of meeting those requirements, including by examination, certification, experience, completion of course work, or other means as determined by the Secretary; and,
- Certify qualified entities as approved bodies for accreditation.

####