



For Immediate Release

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***ENZI CHEERS SIGNING OF GLOBAL AIDS RELIEF BILL
SAYS PEPFAR RENEWAL WILL SAVE LIVES BY IMPROVING FOCUS ON
TREATING INDIVIDUALS WITH HIV/AIDS***

Washington D.C. – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi, R-WY, Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP Committee), today applauded President Bush for signing legislation to reauthorize the global HIV/AIDS relief program known as PEPFAR (President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief).

“This bill will secure America’s place as the world’s leader in the global fight against HIV/AIDS. This is proof that the United States continues to put its money where its mouth is to combat these terrible diseases,” Enzi said at the White House, following the bill’s signing.

“This is not a blank check – it requires greater accountability for every dollar spent by directing the countries receiving money to take the responsibility to maintain and continue to develop their own independent, sustainable programs to address the health care needs of their people.”

Enzi said that reauthorizing PEPFAR will ensure the resources to improve the program’s focus on treating individuals with HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and save lives in countries devastated by poverty and disease.

“This legislation will build upon the remarkable success of PEPFAR. The reauthorization signed into law today establishes new, more challenging treatment goals to ensure that we treat the greatest number of people in the most cost effective manner possible. Providing medical care for individuals with HIV/AIDS must remain the number one priority of our global HIV/AIDS program.”

The Senate approved the bipartisan bill, H.R. 5501, (the “Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008”) by an 80-16 vote on July 16.

“When I traveled to Africa in March, I saw firsthand the value of the President's global AIDS policy,” Enzi said. “We have accomplished things that many thought were impossible from when I first visited the continent five years ago.”

“Now is the time to help PEPFAR make the transition from an emergency aid plan to a sustainable, long range effort that will continue to be effective until these diseases are relegated to the history books.”

Enzi said the bill will:

- Ensure that funding follows patients, and does not get wasted on excessive or unnecessary administrative costs;
- Continue the focus on treatment by requiring that more than half of the funds be used for treatment;
- Provide for a complete accounting of all funds provided to the Global Fund;
- Maintain a balanced, comprehensive approach to prevention by securing funds for the Abstinence and Be Faithful programs;
- Increase the capacity of the health care systems in countries receiving support;
- Ensure that all drugs used for the program are safe and effective;
- Develop a framework for the long-range stability of global AIDS programs; and,
- Encourage countries receiving assistance to develop their own independent and sustainable programs to address the health care needs of their people.

“PEPFAR is truly one of the most successful foreign aid programs in the history of the United States. I want to commend President Bush for his vision in creating this life-saving program, and thank him for his tremendous leadership on this critical issue.”

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