



For Immediate Release

Contact: Craig Orfield
(202) 224-6770

Wednesday, June 17, 2009

Enzi: Careful, Deliberate Finance Committee Process a Sharp Contrast to HELP Committee's Mad Rush on Health Care

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee and a member of the Finance Committee, today said that the HELP Committee should look to the careful, deliberate process of the Finance Committee as a model for a bipartisan approach to health care reform.

“The HELP Committee is moving too fast to do an adequate job on health care reform,” Enzi said. “I hope we don’t become victims of arbitrary deadlines when we could be working together, in a bipartisan way, to get health care reform right. Instead of rushing through this flawed bill, we should take the time to review and try to work out the contentious issues, like we’re doing in the Finance Committee.”

The HELP Committee began consideration of the Kennedy health care bill today, even though key sections of the bill remain blank, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has not been able to provide formal scores of the entire proposal since it remains incomplete, and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has failed to provide official, technical assistance.

In contrast, Senator Max Baucus (D-MT) and Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Chairman and Ranking Member of the Finance Committee, announced today that their committee will not consider its bill until July, allowing senators more time to review information and work out issues.

“I can think of no better way to highlight the flaws in the process at the HELP Committee than by contrasting it to the process that Senators Baucus and Grassley have followed at the Finance Committee,” Enzi said.

“I do not know whether the Finance Committee will ultimately be able to produce a bipartisan bill. There are certainly several provisions they are considering that I may disagree with. In spite of this, their process solicited input from every member of the committee and gave them a choice to air their concerns. That is the kind of process that allows senators to explore different proposals, weigh the pros and cons and ultimately develop a truly bipartisan bill.”

#####