



For Immediate Release

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**Health Care Markup, Day 1: Republicans Sharpen Focus
on Kennedy Bill Costing Too Much, Covering Too Few**

Washington, D.C. – In the first day of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee’s consideration of the Kennedy health care bill, U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), Ranking Member of the HELP Committee, led Republicans in focusing on the Kennedy bill’s high costs and failure to cover tens of millions of Americans.

“This bill costs too much, covers too few and will cause 10 million Americans to lose the health insurance they currently enjoy,” said Enzi, the Senate’s only accountant. “President Obama promised that under his health reform proposal, every American who had coverage that they liked could keep it. This bill fails to deliver on that promise.

Republicans also focused on the HELP Committee process of beginning the markup today, even though key sections of the bill remain blank, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has not been able to provide formal cost estimates of the entire proposal since it remains incomplete, and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has failed to provide official, technical assistance.

“The fundamental flaws in this bill are the direct consequence of how the bill was put together. The bill was drafted exclusively by Democratic staff, who excluded Republicans from the process of preparing the actual legislation,” Enzi said. “That is not how Senator Kennedy and I worked together in the past, and this is not how we managed to produce an impressive record of bipartisan accomplishments at this committee.”

Committee members completed opening statements today, and the committee will proceed to the consideration of amendments on the quality and prevention provisions of the bill next. Republicans will likely offer amendments that would focus on reining in exploding health care costs by reducing the number of medical lawsuits and curbing waste, fraud and abuse.

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