

OFFICES:

Gillette 307-682-6268
Cheyenne 307-772-2477
Casper 307-261-6572
Cody 307-527-9444
Jackson 307-739-9507
D.C. 202-224-3424
website enzi.senate.gov

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-5004

October 9, 2007

MICHAEL ENZI
WYOMING

COMMITTEES:

Health, Education,
Labor and Pensions
Ranking Member
Banking, Housing and
Urban Affairs
Small Business
Budget

Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman, Subcommittee on
Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related
Agencies

Honorable Arlen Specter
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related
Agencies

Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Specter:

In July, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 3043, the House appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education. This bill, as written, includes a hidden provision imperiling the carefully crafted, bipartisan, bicameral compromise reached last Congress to ensure federal HIV/AIDS programs treat all Americans living with HIV/AIDS equally.

This single provision would reverse updated funding formulas that recognize the HIV/AIDS epidemic is shifting. It will un hinge a compromise that took both chambers and both sides of the aisle two years to develop in close consultation with AIDS service organizations, stakeholders, members of the community, and the Administration.

If this provision is allowed to stand, AIDS healthcare disparities will continue. Outdated funding formulas that have disadvantaged minority populations in the Southeast for years will continue. These outdated formulas have caused fatalities in parts of the nation where people are on waiting lists for life saving drugs while older centers of the epidemic are unable to spend all the funding they receive for HIV/AIDS care. The updated funding formulas this provision would seek to undo are currently ensuring that federal AIDS funds are directed to those cities and states shouldering a growing burden of HIV and AIDS cases. In short, the updated formulas ensure that federal HIV/AIDS programs are fighting the epidemic of today and focusing federal efforts on those areas that most need it.

It is particularly important to note that the far-reaching reversal included in the current bill occurred in a vacuum. The stakeholders, AIDS service organizations, and congressional counterparts that have long been at the table on federal HIV/AIDS programs were not consulted or apprised of this provision which will undo years of work based on a decade of research regarding the shifting epidemic.

This provision is not included in current Senate legislation, and we ask that you oppose the inclusion of this Ryan White provision in the Senate appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education. We must continue to target our resources to those most in need. We must ensure that those infected with HIV and living with AIDS will receive our support and our compassion, regardless of where they live.

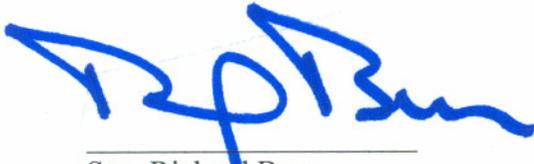
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael B. Enzi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Sen. Michael B. Enzi

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Orrin G. Hatch". The signature is highly stylized and cursive, with a large initial "O".

Sen. Orrin Hatch

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Burr". The signature is bold and cursive, with a large initial "R".

Sen. Richard Burr

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom A. Coburn". The signature is cursive and flows across the line.

Sen. Tom Coburn

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Johnny Isakson". The signature is cursive and somewhat compact.

Sen. Johnny Isakson

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeff Sessions". The signature is cursive and clearly legible.

Sen. Jeff Sessions