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## HIGHER EDUCATION REAUTHORIZATION KEY TO PREPARE WORKFORCE FOR MONUMENTAL CHALLENGES, ENZI SAYS

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP Committee) today said Congress should renew the "Higher Education Act" this year as part of a comprehensive approach to provide the education and training the nation needs to face monumental changes occurring in the workforce.

"Congress has an important opportunity to meet the coming challenges to the nation's workforce head on with the reauthorization of the 'Higher Education Act,'" Enzi said during a hearing Thursday.

"When the workforce changes, so do the needs of college students," he added. "As a result, higher education in America is now in the middle of a revolution and the need for employees with a postsecondary education is growing at a faster rate than ever. It only makes sense then that the need to provide broad access and strong accountability with respect to higher education has never been greater."

Today's hearing was held to identify potential changes the HELP Committee will offer in its reauthorization bill later this year. Ensuring that more students will be able to attend postsecondary education and that they leave those programs with a certificate or degree prepared for future success, will be a key priority.

It is estimated that by 2015, three quarters of all workers will have some postsecondary education or training. However, by 2020, the nation will need 14 million more skilled workers than currently can be provided.

Enzi maintained that renewal of the "Higher Education Act" will help effectively coordinate a range of programs, such as the "Workforce Investment Act," the "Perkins Career and Technical Education Act," and other federal education and training initiatives, to ensure that America remains competitive for years to come.

"Congress must also consider changes to the law that will help today's students attend and succeed in college, such as permitting greater access to distance education, ensuring that students have reliable information about the cost of attending college, and that schools are partners with businesses in supporting a strong American economy," Enzi said.

"The availability of seamless lifelong education opportunities is critical for our long-term competitiveness," he added. "In this global economy, learning is never over. School is never out."