

News from the

**U.S. Senate Committee on
Health, Education, Labor and Pensions**

Michael B. Enzi (Wyoming), Chairman



**For Immediate Release
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Enzi Convenes Roundtable to Focus Government's Role Rebuilding U.S. Gulf Coast in Aftermath of Katrina

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP Committee), today met with representatives from service organizations, businesses and federal, state and local agencies that will play central roles in delivering relief for the victims of Hurricane Katrina to begin addressing the urgent needs that face the communities affected by the disaster.

“America is facing an epic tragedy unlike anything this generation has ever seen,” Enzi said. “As the old adage says so well, failing to plan means planning to fail. This is a tragedy that has threatened to wash away the very blocks and mortar that make up our local communities – including our families, homes, schools and houses of worship.”

Thursday’s Roundtable was the first step in learning how the federal government will need to focus resources and assistance to speed the recovery from the hurricane. It also laid the groundwork for preparing a bipartisan legislative package through the HELP Committee, coordinated by Enzi and Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA), which will be directed at helping rebuild New Orleans, and the coastal communities of Mississippi and Alabama. More than 15 representatives from service organizations, businesses, and federal, state and local agencies participated in the Roundtable.

“I have been impressed by the massive outpouring of support for the victims of Katrina by families and businesses literally from coast to coast,” Enzi added. “It is clear to me that as tragic as the circumstances may be, we have a duty to honor the American spirit that has lifted this nation from disaster time and time again as we focus aid and relief on the Gulf Coast. There is no more urgent task facing us.”

Enzi said the HELP Committee will move as quickly as possible to prepare a comprehensive recovery bill, which the Committee will pass in the next two weeks. “The human suffering Katrina has inflicted on people living on the Gulf Coast is almost incalculable – yet as with every natural disaster inflicted on the United States, we will relieve the hurting, repair the damage and restore hope in these communities,” he said.

Enzi also urged victims of Hurricane Katrina to contact the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to register for assistance by calling 1-800-621-3362.

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