

*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, KENNEDY WILL SEEK BIPARTISAN APPROACH TO RYAN  
WHITE CARE ACT REAUTHORIZATION***

**Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, and Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA), Ranking Member of the HELP Committee, today announced their commitment to seek a bipartisan approach to the reauthorization of the “Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resource Emergency Act,” (RWCA) and promised to produce a bill that can win passage in both the Senate and the House.

“I am pleased to be working with the Ranking Member, Senator Kennedy, on this vital legislation,” Enzi said. “We are working across party lines in both the Senate and the House, along with the White House, to bring forward a bill that will improve accountability, save lives with treatment, and better target funding so that persons with HIV and AIDS have access to high quality care. We look forward to working with a number of our Senate colleagues in developing this legislation so that the Ryan White CARE Act funding can address the epidemic of today, not yesterday.”

Senator Kennedy said: “It is important to be thoughtful and deliberative as we revamp and reauthorize this legislation, so that we do not compromise the infrastructures that provide care and treatment to so many people living with HIV/AIDS.

“We must always remember that Ryan White Care Act is one of our nation’s signature examples of reaching out to those in need, therefore we must ensure that services and supports are available to all those in need, no matter where they live.”

Enzi and Kennedy have been working with the House to develop additional legislation following their listening sessions with AIDS organizations and other stakeholders, which began in January 2006.

The Ryan White CARE Act was initiated in 1990 to provide treatment and care for individuals suffering from HIV/AIDS who are in the greatest need of assistance. The legislation must be reauthorized every five years, and the next authorization is scheduled for September of this year.

“While we have made significant progress throughout the world, there is still much more to do to save lives through education and treatment to ensure equitable treatment for all Americans infected with HIV,” Enzi said. “Until we find the ultimate cure, however, we must ensure that those infected with HIV receive our support and our compassion,” Enzi added.

Working together, Enzi and Kennedy have developed broad principles for the reauthorization of RWCA that will:

- ensure that those who are providing and receiving HIV-related services are obtaining coordinated, helpful federal guidance.
- include authorizations of appropriations with specific dollar amounts, recognizing the current budgetary process.
- reflect current, evolving and ongoing needs of people living with HIV/AIDS, such as issues related to co-morbidities, longer life spans, and health disparities (including an increased incidence of infections among minorities, women, and individuals living in rural areas).
- recognize the latest research regarding knowledge related to HIV/AIDS. Programs should be soundly based on science, when science is available.
- forge a renewed commitment to fill the gaps in care, treatment, and social services so that it is truly the payer of last resort for such services.
- emphasize underserved populations, access to health care and medications, and essential support services.

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