



For Immediate Release

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***CONFERENCE AGREEMENT REACHED ON PERKINS CAREER
AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ACT, ENZI SAYS***

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today announced that a conference agreement has been reached to finalize the "Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act," S.250, a bill he said will "help close the gap that threatens America's long-term competitiveness," by addressing the needs of the nation's changing workforce.

"This bill will help support lifelong learning opportunities for students to gain technical skills and knowledge that will help them find and hold a high skill, high wage job," Enzi said. "For others, participation in these programs can mean the difference between a job with no possibility of advancement and a successful career."

The Perkins Act provides more than \$1.2 billion in federal support for career and technical education programs in all 50 States. It also reauthorizes federal career and technical education programs which were last reauthorized in 1998.

"The Perkins Act has been, and I believe will continue to be, a critical part of ensuring that this nation remains competitive," Enzi added. "Together with the Workforce Investment Act and the Higher Education Act, the Perkins Act is part of a comprehensive system of education and training programs that will help today's students become the leaders in the global economy. I urge the Senate and House to pass this conference agreement quickly, so that the President can sign the bill into law."

"I want to thank my colleagues for their willingness to work toward agreement on many of the issues we've dealt with over the past fifteen months. I applaud the work of House Education and Workforce Committee Chairman, Rep. Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (R-CA), HELP Committee Ranking Member, Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA), and Education and Workforce Committee Ranking Member George Miller (D-CA) for moving this vital issue forward, and all the conferees for being dedicated to making sure this process was a success."

S. 250 will improve programs authorized under the Perkins Act by requiring:

- **A More Effective Accountability System** - that aligns accountability requirements with other federal education and training programs;
- **Stronger Links to Businesses** - that build stronger partnerships between high schools, colleges, and businesses, so they can better meet the needs of the workforce, including small businesses;
- **Better Links from High School to College** - that require states to outline a logical sequence of courses, including high school and college courses, that will lead to an industry recognized credential, certificate, or postsecondary degree;
- **Stronger Academic Focus** - that promotes an enhanced emphasis on academic instruction for federally supported career and technical education programs consistent with other federal education programs such as “No Child Left Behind.”

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