



For Immediate Release

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FDA NOMINEE VON ESCHENBACH APPROVED; ENZI CALLS ON SENATE TO MOVE FORWARD; PROVIDE AGENCY CONFIRMED HEAD

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today said he believes the President's nominee to head the Food and Drug Administration has the "qualifications to head up the agency and bring about reforms necessary to restore consumer confidence in our nation's food and drug watchdog agency."

The HELP Committee approved von Eschenbach's nomination by voice vote. Speaking in support of the nominee, Enzi voiced confidence that Dr. Andrew von Eschenbach "can take charge, take action, and take responsibility for leading the FDA in the best interest of the public health."

"We need a strong leader at the FDA right now, one who has a mandate to act," Enzi said. "There are many items before the FDA that require the immediate attention of an FDA Commissioner vested with full authority. It is time for the Senate to move forward with this nomination."

The agency has been without a confirmed Commissioner for all but 18 months out of the last five and a half years, Enzi noted. "As Commissioner of the FDA, Dr. von Eschenbach will be responsible for advancing the public health by helping to speed innovations in its mission areas, and by helping the public get accurate, science-based information on medicines and foods," he added. "I know that as a physician, he takes this mission to heart."

The FDA has a broad and critical mission in protecting the public health. It also ensures the safety and effectiveness of all drugs, biological products such as vaccines, medical devices, and animal drugs and feed. It also oversees the safety of a vast variety of food products as well as medical and consumer products, including cosmetics.

The Commissioner of Food and Drugs is in charge of an agency that regulates \$1 trillion worth of products a year.

Dr. von Eschenbach has been Acting Commissioner of FDA since September 2005, and has a long and distinguished career in private and public service. He previously served as director the National Cancer Institute and as Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer of the University of Texas' M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston

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