



For Immediate Release

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***ENZI SAYS CAREFUL REVIEW OF FUNDING FOR HEALTH SERVICES TO 9/11 RESPONDERS UNDER WAY; SOLUTION MUST ENSURE PROGRAMS REACH THOSE MOST IN NEED***

**Washington D.C.** – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi, R-WY, Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP Committee), today said he will hold hearings to assess the federal funding needs for health services provided to personnel responding to the events of 9/11.

“The legions of workers who were called to duty in the aftermath of 9/11 – from emergency first responders, including volunteers from across the country, to construction workers - now have very different and challenging health care needs,” Enzi said. “The Senate must not approve a funding proposal that we know cannot meet their diverse needs.”

At Enzi’s direction, HELP Committee staff began meeting last week with officials from New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s office, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, the New York City Fire Department and non-profit organizations such as Heroes Helping Heroes, to discuss the health care needs of 9/11 responders and funding issues surrounding those services. The Committee will continue to work with those same groups to find an appropriate legislative approach to serve the needs of 9/11 responders.

Congress needs to find a long-term solution for the health care needs of the thousands affected by the events of 9/11 – a responsibility that simply cannot be met through its annual appropriations bills, Enzi maintained.

“I am firmly committed to investigating the health effects of 9/11 on all responders, and working with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to ensure their health needs are met,” Enzi said. He added that he will work with New York’s Congressional delegation, including Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) who serves on the HELP Committee.

“The people of New York deserve a proper legislative approach to dealing with the aftermath of this tragedy. As Chairman of the Senate HELP Committee, which has jurisdiction over this matter, I would like to take the time for thoughtful consideration and review of this issue,” Enzi said.

Enzi confirmed that HHS will soon be sending out \$75 million, in addition to the \$125 million it has already distributed, to provide care and treatment to individuals with 9/11-related illnesses over the next few months.

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