



For Immediate Release

Contact: Craig Orfield  
(202) 224-6770

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***ENZI PRAISES WORK OF SENATOR MIKE DeWINE ON BILL TO PROTECT, SERVE NATION'S SENIOR CITIZENS***

**Washington, D.C.** - U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today praised Senator Mike DeWine (R-OH) for his hard work and dedication to ensuring that the "Older Americans Act," H.R. 6197, became law. The legislation, signed into law by President Bush yesterday, reauthorizes programs that will enrich the lives and well being of older Americans through a range of social service programs, including home-delivered nutrition, community service employment, long-term care coordination and elder abuse and neglect prevention.

"Senator DeWine, as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Retirement Security and Aging and as a career-long advocate for America's seniors, was vital in developing this bill and ushering it through the legislative process," Enzi said. "His expertise and his dedication have helped ensure that our nation's older Americans, including 78.2 million aging Baby Boomers, are healthy, fed, housed, able to get where they need to go and safe from abuse and scams."

"The number one resolution of the 2005 White House Conference on Aging called upon Congress to reauthorize the Older Americans Act during the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress. Thanks in large part to the efforts of Senator DeWine, the Senate and the House have accomplished that goal on behalf of one of our nation's greatest resources – older Americans. I am deeply grateful for his continued leadership and support for this critical legislation."

***Key provisions of the "Older Americans Act" Reauthorization will:***

- Direct the Department of Health and Human Services' Assistant Secretary of Aging to appoint a full time officer to take charge of federal elder abuse and prevention services and to coordinate federal elder justice activities;

- Promote the development of systems that enable older individuals to receive long-term care in home and community-based settings based on individual needs and preferences;
- Improve access to programs and services under the Act by addressing the needs of older individuals with limited English proficiency;
- Encourage both States and area agencies on aging to plan for population changes and require state agencies and local area agencies on aging to coordinate activities and develop long-range emergency preparedness plans;
- Improve access to supportive services that help foster independence and maintain quality of life, including assistive technology services and devices, mental health services, and activities to promote life-long learning;
- Expand Caregiver program services to older adults caring for children of any age with a disability; individuals with Alzheimer's disease; and grandparents or relative caregivers, age 55 and older, caring for children of any age; and,
- Ensure that the Older American Community Service Employment Program, a job-training program for older Americans, provides on the job training to unemployed seniors in community service programs – helping seniors build new jobs skills while providing skilled workers for programs serving low-income families and individuals.

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