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**CONTACT:** Laura Capps/ Melissa Wagoner  
(202)

**STATEMENT OF SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY ON THE RELEASE OF THE MINE  
SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION REPORT ON THE SAGO MINE TRAGEDY**

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Last night, the Department of Labor Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) issued a report on the explosion at the Sago Mine in West Virginia. The January 2, 2006 tragedy killed 12 miners and led to the passage by Congress of the MINER Act, which was signed into law on June 15, 2006. MSHA's report found that the explosion at Sago Mine would have been far less severe if tougher standards for sealing off underground areas had been in place.

Senator Kennedy said, "As this report clearly shows, the tragic deaths at the Sago Mine could have been prevented by stronger safety standards. We have long pressed MSHA to strengthen critical standards and this report's findings underscore the urgency of this need. I commend MSHA's announcement that it plans to take immediate action on mine seals, but more needs to be done to prevent future tragedies. We need other new standards, based on the latest science, and diligent enforcement of these standards to protect miners' safety."