



For Immediate Release

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## ***HELP COMMITTEE PASSES BILL TO SAVE LIVES THROUGH EARLY DETECTION OF BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCERS***

**Washington D.C.** – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi, R-WY, Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP Committee), today applauded the HELP Committee’s approval of the “National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program Reauthorization Act of 2007,” a bill to renew a program that brings free and low-cost breast and cervical cancer screenings to low-income, uninsured women.

“The widespread use of screening tools, particularly the mammography and Pap test, is saving thousands of lives each year, but more can be done to ensure that more women have access to these critical screenings,” Enzi said. “Through early diagnosis and treatment, these tests have the potential to prevent nearly all deaths from cervical cancer and more than 30 percent of breast cancer deaths.”

“Despite advances to improve awareness about the effectiveness of these tools, many women, particularly older, low-income, and racial and ethnic minority women, still are not screened regularly. By improving screening rates for underserved women, we can prevent many deaths from breast and cervical cancers.”

The bill, S. 624, would modify the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP), which was established by Congress in 1991. Administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the NBCCEDP now operates in all 50 States, four U.S. territories, the District of Columbia, and 13 American Indian and Alaska Native organizations, and is a successful federal-state partnership that also capitalizes on partnering with local community organizations.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women, accounting for nearly one of every three cancers diagnosed in the United States. This year alone, it is estimated that 211,240 new cases of breast cancer will be diagnosed, and 40,870 lives will be lost to breast cancer. Cervical cancer disproportionately affects minority and medically underserved women, who experience higher incidence and mortality rates from this cancer. This year, an estimated 10,370 cases of cervical cancer are expected to be diagnosed, and 3,710 women will die from this disease.

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