



For Immediate Release

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***ENZI CALLS FOR ACTION NOW ON SMALL BUSINESS HEALTH PLANS; WILL OBJECT TO ANY HEALTH INSURANCE LEGISLATION THAT DOES NOT INCLUDE THIS RELIEF***

**Washington D.C.** – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi, R-WY, Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP Committee), today urged his colleagues to work together in a bipartisan way to allow market-based, small business pooling plans to expand the range of affordable group health insurance available to the nation’s small businesses and working families.

“In the coming weeks, I will introduce legislation to allow small businesses, trade associations, and local union employees to band together across the nation and offer affordable group health insurance to working families, and I expect to get a fair vote on the Senate floor on that bill,” Enzi said. “Until then, I will object to any health insurance coverage legislation in this body that does not include market-based pooling and relief for small businesses and working families.”

“America’s small businesses and working families are crying out for help under the weight of skyrocketing health insurance costs, yet my Democrat colleagues continue to hold small business health plans hostage to their expensive, impossible, and frightening vision of Medicare-for-all,” Enzi said. “It is past time that Democrat leaders stopped playing partisan politics with the health care of Americans and focused on delivering results, not empty promises. Small business health plans and market pooling offer a real solution, for real people, that we can enact this year.”

“In just five years the average cost of employer-based family coverage has nearly doubled, from \$4,248 five years ago to \$8,167 per family today, creating an ever-widening gap between the health haves and have not,” Enzi said. “By allowing small business groups and working families to pool their members, we can reduce the cost of health insurance, expand access to health care, and reduce the number of uninsured Americans.”

Enzi’s comments came as the nation marks “Cover the Uninsured Week” this week, and “Small Business Week” next week. Enzi said he continues to work with colleagues to find a bipartisan approach to expanding access to affordable, market-

based group health insurance, adding that he will “continue banging the drum for relief until something gets done.”

The Senate recently approved an amendment to the budget bill (S. Con. Res. 21) offered by Enzi to create a deficit neutral reserve fund to be used in the event that the Senate develops a bill to allow market-based, small business health care pooling plans.

“As the wide bipartisan support for the small business health plan amendment shows, we are making progress, and I intend to stick with it,” Enzi said. “Market-based pooling must be part of any comprehensive health reform solution.”

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