



For Immediate Release

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***ENZI DENOUNCES HELP COMMITTEE APPROVAL OF
DEMOCRAT "MARLBORO PROTECTION ACT"***

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today denounced the HELP Committee's approval of a Democrat bill he said "coddles Big Tobacco's ambitious marketing plans while protecting the industry's best tools to recruit and addict young smokers to inherently dangerous tobacco products."

"Trying to make cigarettes safer through a billion-dollar bureaucracy is a waste of time and money," Enzi said. "The right approach is to get people to stop smoking, or better yet, never to start. Unfortunately, this bill just doesn't do that. I believe we can do better."

"Tobacco is one of the biggest contributors to our nation's growing health care crisis. We need to fight the war on tobacco head on, not sign a peace treaty with Philip Morris, a company that perpetuates and profits from the crisis. Big Tobacco supports this bill because they have a stake in maintaining the status quo. I don't. They're happy with a bill that doesn't stop people from smoking; I'm not. I want real change. We can and we must do better than this bill."

The HELP Committee today approved the "Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act," S.625, a bill that would require the regulation of tobacco products by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The bill would gut the authority that Congress has bestowed and staunchly defended for the FDA – the authority to remove health threats from the marketplace, Enzi maintained.

"Poison peddlers shouldn't get to decide how we as responsible legislators fight the war against their deadly products. I urge my friends in the public health community not to become so desperate to do something about the tobacco problem in this country that they fall for this wolf in sheep's clothing," Enzi added. "Keep asking yourself: if this bill is good for Big Tobacco, how can it be good for public health? The fact is, it can't. This bill is nothing more than a 'Marlboro Protection Act,' written to keep Philip Morris at the top of the tobacco market."

Enzi urged his colleagues to consider legislation he introduced last week to wipe out tobacco use in America through an innovative cap-and-trade program that will shrink the size of the tobacco market over the next 20 years.

“Tobacco kills. We need new ideas to get people to stop smoking, or better yet, never to start,” Enzi said. “That’s what my legislation does. My bill contains a novel cap-and-trade program that will guarantee that fewer people suffer the deadly consequences of smoking, while providing flexibility in how those reductions are achieved.”

“Cap-and-trade programs have a proven track record in the environmental arena, particularly in addressing acid rain. My tobacco plan is based on the successful program in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. This system achieved the desired results faster and at lower cost than had been anticipated. The same can be done for tobacco,” Enzi said.

The cap-and-trade program will reduce the adverse health effects of tobacco use through reductions in the size of the US tobacco market to fewer than 2 percent of the population over 20 years. Tobacco manufacturers would be required to meet specific user level limits by specified deadlines and the plan would set up a market share allocation and transfer system in which allowances could be used, banked, traded, or sold freely on the open market.

The Enzi proposal, the “Help End Addiction to Lethal Tobacco Habits Act” (HEALTH Act), would also close loopholes in the law that tobacco companies have exploited and enjoyed for far too long. It would use proven approaches to help people stop using tobacco products and implement tried and true prevention programs.

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