



For Immediate Release

Contact: Craig Orfield
(202) 224-6770

Tuesday, September 11, 2007

***ENZI CALLS FOR HELP COMMITTEE ACTION
ON PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY PLAN FOR AIDS RELIEF,
KEY GLOBAL HEALTH BILL REAUTHORIZATION***

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today said that the HELP Committee should hold hearings to examine the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), a monumental global health program that fights HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria abroad. PEPFAR is due for reauthorization next year.

"In the last several years, we have made great strides in fighting AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis (TB), but there is still much to do," Enzi said. "The HELP Committee played an active role in drafting PEPFAR, and we included key provisions to ensure accountability so that every dollar is well-spent and our partner countries pay their fair share. Now is the time for the HELP Committee to hold hearings to look in depth at how these provisions have worked and how they can be strengthened."

Today, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is scheduled to mark up the "Stop Tuberculosis Now Act," S. 968. Enzi commended the concern of the bill's supporters about the disease, but said that Congress should instead focus on comprehensive reauthorization of PEPFAR, adding that the HELP Committee will once again play a key role in that process.

"Under PEPFAR, we established coordinated efforts to fight a number of diseases across the world, and these efforts have had enormous success," Enzi said. "Congress must not risk undermining these programs by picking them apart and considering them in a piecemeal fashion, or by reducing strong accountability measures authored by the HELP Committee."

"TB is a matter of grave concern, at home and abroad. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the HELP Committee to examine programs that fight this horrific and preventable disease within the scope of responsible PEPFAR reauthorization."

Enzi said that his office has been looking into the June incident involving Andrew Speaker, who brought national attention to TB in the United States when he flew to and from Europe while infected with a drug-resistant form of the disease. Because the Center

for Disease Control (CDC) is under the jurisdiction of the HELP Committee, Enzi said the Committee must investigate the CDC's response to that incident.

“I hope that by holding hearings on PEPFAR and global health programs, the HELP Committee will shed light on the role that CDC has to play in combating diseases like TB not only in the United States, but across the world,” Enzi said.

####