



For Immediate Release

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***ENZI URGES INNOVATION, COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH TO  
DEVELOP CRITICAL MINE SAFETY TECHNOLOGY***

**Washington D.C.** – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi, R-WY, Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP Committee), today met with Dr. Jeffrey Kohler, Associate Director for Mine Safety and Health at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), to discuss developments in mine safety technology, and said he is pleased with the progress that is being made in improving communications and tracking systems.

“We have to harness the power of American innovation to ensure that all mines have state of the art communication and tracking systems,” Enzi said. “Following the enactment of the MINER Act last year, there has been a great deal of progress in developing good two-way communications systems, and we are now looking at prototypes of technology with capabilities we never thought was possible years ago.”

Enzi was also briefed on the progress of developing the next generation of breathable air equipment that miners can carry on their belts, which he said is critical to sustain miners awaiting rescues after an accident.

“We must strongly support the fine research professionals and institutions that are working to improve mine safety technology,” Enzi said. “We must make sure that the government, academia and private industry work together, pooling their knowledge and abilities, so that we get the technology we need, sooner. Right now, thanks to the MINER Act, NIOSH has awarded 7 research contracts to outside partners on communications and tracking alone. The result has been a truly collaborative research and development environment.

“Our role is to be sure nothing stands in the way of continued collaboration and innovation. In the end, we will have readily available technology that saves miners lives and makes them feel safer. That is our goal.”

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