



For Immediate Release

Contact: Craig Orfield  
(202) 224-6770

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***ENZI: PEACE TREATY WITH PHILIP MORRIS  
NO WAY TO WIN WAR ON TOBACCO***

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today denounced HELP Committee approval of a bill requiring the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to regulate tobacco, arguing that the bill would do nothing to stop anyone from smoking or help them quit, and would place new burdens on a struggling agency.

“Trying to make cigarettes safer through a billion-dollar bureaucracy is a waste of time and money,” Enzi said. “This bill will do nothing to help people quit smoking, or stop kids from taking up this deadly habit. We need to fight the war on tobacco head on, not sign a peace treaty with Philip Morris, one of the authors and strongest supporters of this bill.

“My fierce opposition to smoking is a result of smoking killing my dad, and my mom, and my mother-in-law, and second-hand smoking conclusively affecting me. This is not political. This is personal.”

Enzi said he regrets that many of his efforts – and those of other Republican members of the Committee – to amend and improve the bill were rejected in the Democrat majority’s rush to approve the tobacco bill, S.982. Enzi offered amendments to move tobacco regulation to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which is better suited for the job, and to let science, not politics, determine how to regulate all flavors, including menthol. Enzi is also working to increase penalties for tobacco companies who break the law and to reduce health insurance premiums for nonsmokers.

“We must do more to put out smoking, but this misguided bill isn’t the solution,” he added.

Enzi said that requiring FDA to regulate tobacco would take away from its core mission, regulating medical products designed to restore health and keeping the nation’s food supply safe.

“When the HELP Committee last marked up this legislation, things were rocky at the FDA. Now they are critical. That agency simply cannot be tasked with regulating tobacco, or its entire public health mission could collapse. FDA approves cures, not poisons. Food safety and drug safety have to be the top priorities for FDA,” he said.

“Every day, we hear about some new problem the Food and Drug Administration faces in protecting our health. From contaminated peanut butter to tainted toothpaste to counterfeit blood thinner, this agency is in dire need of Congressional support to carry out its mission. We should be focusing our efforts on increasing the number of inspectors, and on updating the food safety authorities, not on adding an impossible burden that perverts the agency’s mission.”

Enzi supported a substitute amendment, which the Committee rejected, that would have created a new agency within the Department of Health and Human Services to regulate tobacco instead of FDA. That amendment would have nearly eliminated advertising for tobacco products, prohibited the use of terms like “light” and “mild,” required full disclosure of ingredients in tobacco products and made it more difficult for kids to purchase or use tobacco.

The HELP Committee approved the bill by a 15-8 vote.

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