



For Immediate Release

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What's in the Fine Print? Sidewalks, Grocery Stores, and Jungle Gyms HELP Committee Democrats' Bill Chock-full of Wasteful Spending

Washington, D.C. –U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee and the Senate's only accountant, today criticized wasteful spending in a health care reform bill released by HELP Committee Democrats this week.

"The Kennedy-Dodd bill will pave sidewalks, build jungle gyms, and open grocery stores, but it won't bring down health care costs or make quality coverage more affordable," Enzi said. "In a time of record debt and deficits, how can Democrats justify the wasteful spending in this bill?"

"We need to root out the waste, fraud and abuse that is driving up health care costs – not create a whole slew of new wasteful programs," said Enzi, the only Senator to serve on the HELP, Finance and Budget Committees, which share jurisdiction over health care reform.

The HELP Committee Democrats' bill would:

- Establish a "Community Makeover Program" to spend billions to beautify streets, up to \$10 per person in selected communities;
- Fund a federal government program to build new sidewalks and bike paths, and put up street lights;
- Finance new grocery stores and farmers' markets;
- Revoke employers rights to provide free wellness benefits to employees;
- Mandate that a new Washington health police bureaucracy dictate what local restaurants can offer their customers; and,
- Subsidize community projects like building jungle gyms in parks.

"Some of these programs may have value, but this is the wrong bill at the wrong time," Enzi said. "With our nation's health and economy at stake, this bill must not turn into a Christmas list for every partisan interest group in Washington."

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