



For Immediate Release

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## **HELP Committee Rushing to Mark-up a Bill the White House Calls an “Incomplete, Older Proposal”**

**Washington, D.C.** – Despite repeated calls from Republicans to take the time to get health care legislation done right, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee today begins consideration of the Kennedy bill, which preliminary analysis shows will cost over \$1 trillion, leave tens of millions without coverage, and cause millions more to lose their health insurance.

“Why are we rushing to act on this bill? Asking the Committee to consider a bill before they’ve even finished writing it is putting the cart before the horse. We need to take the time to get this right, not barrel through the normal process in order to meet arbitrary deadlines,” said Senator Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), Ranking Member of the HELP Committee, and the only Senator serving on the HELP, Finance and Budget Committees.

Yesterday, White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs went so far as to characterize the bill as, “One incomplete older proposal I don’t think is indicative of where we are now.”

Republicans have urged Democrats to wait for a complete bill, so that more reliable cost estimates from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and technical assistance from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) can be received before rushing to full Committee consideration of this landmark bill. Democrats have yet to file a complete bill, and HHS has failed to provide official, written technical assistance on the bill.

A preliminary analysis from CBO concluded that the Kennedy bill would expand the federal deficit by about \$1 trillion, force ten million Americans to lose their health insurance, and only expand coverage by 16 million people – barely a third of the current uninsured population.

“From what we’ve seen, this bill costs too much, covers too few, and will force many to lose their health insurance,” Enzi said. “This bill doesn’t meet the President’s clear standard – if you like the care you have, you can keep it.

“I hope that Democrats will stop trying to rush this very flawed, deeply partisan bill, and start working with us on a bipartisan solution to ensure every American has access to quality, affordable care.”

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