



Wednesday, September 16, 2009

Enzi Statement on Finance Committee Health Care Bill

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi, R-Wyo., today issued the following statement:

“I am disappointed that deadlines took precedence over agreement of the bipartisan group of Finance Committee members, as we worked on a final health care bill. All of the Senators in this group have been working tirelessly and in good faith, and we have made significant progress on many issues. I especially want to highlight the good work of Chairman Max Baucus and Ranking Member Chuck Grassley, who have resisted the calls for partisanship in trying to develop a health care proposal that would provide health care coverage for all Americans.

“Unfortunately, there are fundamental issues that we were not able to resolve by the deadline that was set for us. I am deeply disappointed that we could not take the time to find ways to resolve these issues. The proposal released today still spends too much, and it does too little to cut health care costs for those with health insurance. At a time when our nation faces a \$9 trillion deficit, we should target assistance to those in the greatest need without creating unsustainable new entitlement programs.

“President Obama said that health reform must improve competition in the insurance marketplace and lower health care costs for those who currently have insurance. I agree, but this bill does not go far enough toward achieving those goals. I also believe that health care reform should not be built on expanding the unsustainable Medicaid program, which 40 percent of doctors will not accept. Coverage is worthless if you can’t see a doctor. If you have Medicare Advantage this bill could reduce your coverage.

“I have other concerns. This is the most complicated bill any of us have ever worked on. It affects about 16 percent of the economy and 100 percent of the people. Those of us who have spent months working on the hundreds of different areas can appreciate the multiple moving parts and the effect getting it wrong would have. Although there is a sense of urgency, getting it done fast is not as important as getting it done correctly.

“While I cannot support the current proposal, I remain committed to working on health care reform proposals that will have broad bipartisan support. The best way to reform our health

care system is to do it step by step. That is how you gain the trust of the American people. Let's start by focusing on the issues where we already have broad, bipartisan agreement.”

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