



For Immediate Release

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**No Protections from Skyrocketing Health Care Costs Caused by Finance Bill
*Democrats Reject Enzi Amendment to Ensure Bill Won't Drive up Costs***

Washington, D.C. – Democrats on the Senate Finance Committee today defeated an amendment from Senator Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.) that would have protected Americans from dramatic increases in health care costs caused by the health care bill being considered by the committee.

The Enzi amendment would have prohibited provisions in the bill from going into effect in any state until that state certified that the new regulations would not drive up health insurance premiums.

“The Finance Committee bill will drive up health care costs and make health insurance unaffordable for millions of Americans. That’s the wrong kind of reform. Americans can’t afford a health care bill that leads to skyrocketing costs,” Enzi said.

“My amendment would protect American families from provisions of this bill that will drive up their health insurance premiums. Flawed new rules that lead directly to higher costs shouldn’t go into effect.”

The Finance Committee bill would drive up health insurance premiums for many Americans by overturning laws in 42 states that allow health insurance companies to charge lower premiums for younger people. These state laws encourage young people to buy health insurance. Because young people have fewer medical problems and lower health care costs, their premiums help subsidize the costs of older, sicker individuals. As higher numbers of young, healthy people join an insurance pool, the costs become lower for everyone.

By preempting these state laws, the Finance bill would force insurance companies to charge higher premiums to younger people. This could lead many young people to conclude that the price of insurance is higher than the risk of getting sick or injured, and they could decide to drop coverage and pay the individual mandate tax in the bill. This would result in smaller insurance pools consisting of older, sicker people, and everyone would pay higher premiums.

The Enzi amendment would have required that before these provisions could go into effect, each state insurance commissioner would need to certify that the new regulations would not result in higher health insurance premiums for a majority of their state’s residents. Democrats defeated the amendment on a party-line vote.

“I’m disappointed that Democrats rejected this common-sense proposal, but I’m going to keep working to find ways to bring down health care costs and help all Americans get the quality, affordable care they need.”

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