



For Immediate Release

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***ENZI: ACCESS TO PREVENTIVE SERVICES
CRITICAL FOR RURAL PATIENTS***

Washington, D.C. –U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today said that comprehensive health care reform must include efforts to ensure that rural and frontier areas can meet their health care needs, including access to primary care physicians and preventive services.

“For families in rural and frontier areas, health care reform means more than just expanding insurance coverage,” Enzi said. “Comprehensive health care reform must include expanding access to all types of health care providers, particularly life-saving and cost-saving preventive services,” Enzi said.

Before today’s HELP Committee hearing titled, “Access to Prevention and Public Health for High Risk Populations,” Enzi said that his comprehensive health care reform bill, 10 Steps to Transform Health Care in America, emphasizes the importance of prevention, and takes steps to expand access to primary care services in rural and underserved areas.

“We need to move our system from sick care to health care – and that means focusing on prevention, not intervention,” Enzi said. “It’s common sense – an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Any earnest effort to expand access to health insurance, reduce health care costs, and improve quality of care must include targeted provisions to prevent and manage chronic diseases, and must ensure that patients in all areas of the country have access to these services.”

Enzi noted that chronic diseases, like heart disease, diabetes, and cancer, account for 70 percent of all deaths in the United States – but many of these illnesses can be prevented or managed through lifestyle changes and regular health screenings.

“Chronic diseases are among the most common, most costly, and most deadly illnesses that patients face – but they are also often the most preventable and most treatable. By helping patients across the country, particularly in underserved populations, prevent and manage these deadly diseases, we can save lives and money.”

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