



For Immediate Release

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Tuesday, March 11, 2008

***ENZI URGES APPLYING LESSONS LEARNED DOUBLING NIH  
BUDGET TO NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION BUDGET***

**Washington, D.C.** - U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today urged Congress to apply the lessons learned as it restructured and doubled funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as it now considers the President's request to double funding for basic research conducted by the National Science Foundation.

"To ensure that the United States remains a world leader in research to find cures and life-giving therapies for diseases that afflict too many Americans, we would do well to give the National Science Foundation and its leaders the flexibility to fund research where progress – as measured by sound science – is being made," Enzi said, following a HELP Committee hearing, "The Broken Pipeline: Losing Opportunities in the Life Sciences."

"During the last Congress, we passed the 'NIH Reform Act' to ensure that the NIH continues to be a driver of innovation," Enzi said. "That act provided the director of the NIH with the flexibility and resources he needed to address a changing list of priorities such as funding new programs, encouraging young investigators, and promoting innovative, cross cutting research. The same approach is needed to support the nation's ongoing research in life sciences while meeting tighter and tighter demands on our budgetary resources," he added.

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**Statement of Senator Mike Enzi  
HELP Committee Hearing**

*"The Broken Pipeline: Losing Opportunities in the Life Sciences"*

Thank you Chairman Kennedy for holding today's hearing. I also want to thank our hearing participants for taking the time to join us. I am looking forward to hearing your views, insights and suggestions about our Life Sciences system and what is working well, and what needs to be improved. Your recommendations will greatly assist us in the effort to ensure that we not only make progress in this field, but continue to be a world

leader in the effort to research and find cures for the diseases that continue to afflict far too many Americans.

Throughout the history of our nation, generations of American scientists have looked for ways to improve the human condition and address the problem of disease and the afflictions of old age. As they conducted their research, each scientist's work built on the discoveries that preceded it, and the results they achieved over the years have enabled us to live longer, healthier, more productive lives. Over the years, the progress we have made depended upon new generations of scientists taking up and carrying on the work of those who came before them. The Federal government played a central role in that effort by providing the funds that were needed to sustain and support the work they were doing and train those who were doing the research.

Our investment in life science and in NIH has been a central part of that effort. NIH-funded research has played an integral role in most of the discoveries of the past 50 years that have improved human health. In the United States alone, NIH research has helped lead to:

- An 80 percent overall five-year survival rate for childhood cancers;
- A 70 percent decline in AIDS-related deaths between 1995 and 2001;
- A more than 40 percent decline in sudden infant death syndrome rates between 1994 and 2000;
- 40 and 51 percent declines, respectively, in death rates from heart disease and stroke between 1975 and 2000;
- The ability to eliminate or greatly reduce symptoms in 80 percent of schizophrenia patients and to improve the quality of life for more than 19 million individuals suffering from depression; and,
- A blood supply that is the safest in the world.

In addition to saving lives, our investment in research has led to the creation of a new industry and the jobs that were needed to sustain it. Because of our investment in NIH and the technology that has spun out of it, the United States has been a world leader in health care, as we have developed a long list of vaccines, therapeutic medicines and devices to combat disease.

To ensure that the NIH continues to be a driver of innovation, we passed the NIH Reform Act during the last Congress. This act provided the director of the NIH with the flexibility and resources he needed to address a changing list of priorities. I am pleased that the Director, Dr. Zerhouni has used that authority to create new programs, encourage young investigators, and fund innovative cross cutting research. It is particularly worth noting that he was able to do this with an appropriation that did not meet the authorization levels that this Committee enacted

Although appropriations that match authorization levels are important to allow administrators at the NIH to plan and budget, it is also important to remember that our resources are finite. Ultimately the NIH needs to have the flexibility to put the resources

it is given where they can be used to the best advantage, funding scientists and science that are deemed the most appropriate to fund.

That is our current status, but it may not stay that way for much longer. The budget and the priorities that we set are continuing to be squeezed tighter and tighter by the demands of each year's mandatory spending. It is a difficult problem, but with planning and a compelling vision for the future, it is one that can be overcome.

Although this hearing will focus on NIH, it is important to remember the fact that the research arm of the Federal government is made up of more than just the NIH. The National Science Foundation, the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the National Aeronautic and Space Administration, and the USDA are also important components of the federal government's commitment to science and research. Just like life sciences, material sciences, mathematics, aerospace, and electronics are crucial to our future health and well-being. Further, it is clear that advances outside of the health sciences drive the advances made in life sciences.

As we examine this report it is important that we look to the experience at NIH and apply those lessons to the National Science Foundation. President Bush's announcement that the Administration wants to double the National Science Foundation should serve as an invitation to learn from the NIH doubling experience and the success it has proven to be.

Thank you all for coming today and I look forward to the discussion we will have on the implications of this issue. There will be no greater influence on the quality of our future than the ability of our people to lead happy, healthy and fully productive lives.

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