



EDWARD M. KENNEDY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewer's Briefing Materials **Michael Enzi Interview, 09/19/2006**

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Miller Center Documents¹

- Michael Enzi Timeline.

Secondary Source Materials

- Michael Enzi bio, <http://bioguide.congress.gov>.
- "Vocation Education Bill Stalls," *2004 Congressional Quarterly Almanac* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 2005) pp. 7-5 to 7-6.
- Robert Pear, "Inquiry Opens on FDA Chief's Resignation," *The New York Times*, 09/30/2005.
- Greg Toppo, "Lawmakers Seek Probe of Reading First Program," *USA Today*, 10/10/2005.
- Sean Ruppert, "Mine Act to Become Federal Law," *The Daily Athenaeum*, 6/14/2006.
- "Sens. Rockefeller, Byrd Win Senate Fight for Greater Mine Safety," *US Fed News* 05/16/2006.
- Noam N. Levey and Richard Simon, "Senate Passes Overhaul of Pensions System," *Los Angeles Times*, 08/04/2006.
- Peter Baker, "Bush Signs Sweeping Revision of Pension Law," *The Washington Post*, 08/18/2006.
- Dietra Henderson, "Senate Likely to Vote on Stalled FDA Nomination," *The Boston Globe*, 08/02/2006.
- Lisa Richwine, "Key Senators Unveil Bill to Bolster Drug Safety," *Reuters Health E-Line*, 07/19/2006.
- "Sens. Enzi, Kennedy Introduce Drug Safety Legislation to Ensure Better Safeguards for Millions Taking Prescription Drugs," *US Fed News*, 08/03/2006.

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SENATOR MICHAEL ENZI TIMELINE

Prepared by James McGill Patterson

Miller Center, University of Virginia, 09/05/2006

1997

November Senator Michael B. Enzi (R-WY) is elected to U.S. Senate.

2001

June Senators Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA), John McCain (R-AZ), and John Edwards (D-NC) offer the Senate a bill to provide greater patient control over their managed-care health insurance plans. The most prominent feature of the bill is the ability for patients to sue their health plans in federal courts, where they could collect up to \$5 million in civil damages and an unlimited amount in economic and non-economic damages. Also, the bill allows patients to sue health plan providers in state courts with limits set by individual states. Enzi attempts to amend the bill to protect from liability 6% of health plan employers who financed and administered. His amendment is tabled. The bill passes committee and floor votes. The House passes its own version, but the two houses do not settle on conferees before the session ends. (*2001 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 2002, pp. 12-3 to 12-6)

2002 After the collapse of Enron Corp. sent the value of the company's stock and, subsequently, the 401(k) plans of Enron employees plummeting, EMK offers the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pension Committee a bill to offer some protection and flexibility for those investing in 401(k) accounts. EMK's bill allows companies not providing traditional pension plans to offer stock as either a contribution to an employee's 401(k) or as an investment option but never as both. Employees could seek investment advice from third parties. Employers would be held accountable for taking or concealing action that harms the value of the stock, and employees could sue company executives to recover losses resulting from malfeasance. Enzi and Senator Tim Hutchinson (R-AR) object to another provision in the bill placing restrictions on the amount of investment employees could make in company stock. Their amendment to strike the provision loses 10-11 along partisan lines. EMK's bill passes committee, also along party lines but does not reach a vote on the floor. (*2002 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 2003, pp. 12-3 to 12-7)

2004

September Enzi proposes to the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee a bill to update the 1998 Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, the law authorizing the nation's main vocational education program. The Perkins

act covers two programs, Perkins state grants that support training for low-income students and the Tech-Prep program that funds science, math, and technology classes to assist students transferring to community colleges or vocational schools. The House version merges the two programs, while Enzi's version keeps the two separate. EMK cosponsors Enzi's bill, and the committee passes it with bipartisan support. The bill does not reach the floor before Congress adjourns early because of the ongoing presidential election. (*2004 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 2005, pp. 7-5 to 7-6)

2005

- January* Enzi begins as Chair of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions for the 109th Congress.
- July* EMK backs President George W. Bush's nomination of Lester Crawford as commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration. Enzi had been pushing for Crawford's nomination for months. Partly because of EMK's support, the Senate votes to approve Crawford 78 to 16. (*The New York Times*, 06/19/2005)
- September* Enzi and EMK write a letter to the inspector general of the Department of Health and Human Services Daniel R. Levinson. In the letter, Enzi and EMK demand a federal investigation to determine whether the former FDA commissioner Lester Crawford filed accurate financial disclosure forms during Senate hearings reviewing Crawford's appointment. (*The Boston Globe*, 09/30/2005; *The New York Times*, 09/30/2005)
- October* EMK, Enzi, and three other Senators on the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions demand an investigation to determine whether certain book publishers are receiving preferential treatment under the Reading First program. Reading First is a program giving \$1 billion a year in funding to underprivileged schools, but some staff members for the Reading First program have also been consultants to the publishers who appear to be preferred book providers to those schools receiving the Reading First money. (*USA Today*, 10/10/2005)

2006

- February* EMK and Enzi disagree during the hearing to confirm Richard M. Stickler to the Mine Safety and Health Administration. EMK expresses doubt about whether the Bush nominee has a sufficient commitment to mine worker safety. Enzi, on the other hand, supports Stickler's appointment, emphasizing that federal agencies should serve as partners and not opponents to coal producers. (*The New York Times*, 02/01/2006)
- May* EMK and Enzi, along with Senators Jay Rockefeller (D-WV), Robert Byrd (D-WV), Johnny Isakson (R-GA), and Patty Murray (D-WA) sponsor the Mine

Improvement and New Emergency Response (MINER) Act. The MINER Act, among its many provisions, requires the installation of breathable air devices along escape routes, requires that rescue teams be located near the mines for which they are responsible, steeper fines for violations, and provides for scholarships to train inspectors and grants to improve safety training. The bill passes quickly out of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and passes unanimously on the Senate floor. The House version passes with a significant majority, and Bush signs the bill in June. (*US Fed News*, 05/16/2006; *The Daily Athenaeum*, 05/24/2006)

July

Enzi negotiates an agreement over the Pension Protection Act, a bill shoring up private retirement programs. The bill requires private employers to fund their pension plans fully over seven years, disallows private employers from skipping payments to under-funded plans, and charges higher pension insurance premiums on companies with under-funded pension plans. EMK voices strong support for the plan, saying, "In this case, Democrats and Republicans worked together and America's workers and retirees came out the winners." Bush signs the bill on August 17th. (*The New York Times*, 07/20/2006; *Los Angeles Times*, 08/04/2006; *The Washington Post*, 08/18/2006)

The press reports on a draft version of the Enzi and EMK collaboration to strengthen FDA oversight of drugs both currently on the market and still under review. The draft version of the bill contains requirements that the pharmaceutical company and the FDA settle on a risk evaluation strategy prior to FDA approval. Built into the bill is a process for resolving disputes and deadlines for agreeing to a plan. Once the FDA and the pharmaceutical company agree on a strategy, the FDA can fine the company for noncompliance, with fines ranging from \$15,000 to \$250,000 for each offence. The FDA and the pharmaceutical company must meet each year for three years to review the plan. The bill also requires pharmaceutical companies to publish on a government website all later stage studies and list earlier studies for any drug they wish to put on the market. The FDA will not review a drug until all relevant tests have been published on the government website. (*Reuters Health E-Line*, 06/19/2006)

August

Enzi and EMK introduce S. 3807 Enhancing Drug Safety and Innovation Act, the FDA reform bill parts of which experts had leaked earlier in the summer. (*The Scientist*, 08/08/2006)