

Press Release of Senator Ensign

ENSIGN BILL ON MAMMOGRAPHY STANDARDS HEADS TO PRESIDENT

Tuesday, October 12, 2004

Washington, D.C. – President George W. Bush is expected to sign into law the Mammography Quality Standards Reauthorization Act, introduced by Senator John Ensign, to maintain access to high quality mammography services for every woman in America. The House of Representatives passed the measure last Tuesday, and the Senate approved the bill Saturday.

“Seeing this legislation signed into law in October is an incredibly fitting way to commemorate Breast Cancer Awareness Month,” Ensign stated. “The best tools in the fight against breast cancer are education and early detection. Quality mammograms play a key role in detecting breast cancer in its earliest, most treatable stages.”

The Mammography Quality Standards Act (MQSA) was originally passed in 1992 and created national standards to ensure the quality of x-ray images. MQSA remains an essential tool for early detection and for combating mortality associated with breast cancer. Reauthorization of the legislation is supported by breast cancer advocacy organizations including the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation and the National Breast Cancer Coalition.

“Our mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters are at risk for this horrible disease, but there is hope,” said Ensign. “We must do all that we can to ensure that the best preventive resources are available to women across the country. Their lives depend on it.”

Ensign’s legislation would extend the current program through 2007 and allow facilities seeking reaccreditation to continue providing mammography services pending reaccreditation so long as the quality of the mammography is not compromised. This would prevent a gap in services and ensure that mammography services are readily available.

Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) coauthored the legislation with Ensign.