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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C. Nov. 7, 1969---A bill co-sponsored by U.S. Senator Bob Dole(R-Kans.) to extend the Great Plains Conservation program through December 31, 1981, has been passed by both the House and the Senate.

The program would have ended December 31, 1971. Sections of 10 states including the western two-thirds of Kansas are in the Great Plains area. The other states are Texas, Nevada, Oklahoma, Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico, North and South Dakota and Wyoming.

Dole, a member of the Senate Agriculture and Forestry Committee, said the Great Plains program was established in 1956 to help save land that was rapidly deteriorating because of serious dust storm and water erosion due to extended drought.

Basic objective of the program is to provide assistance to farmers and ranchers in applying whole farm conservation programs. It is administered through the soil conservation districts.

"More than 31,500 farmers and ranchers have entered into long-term contracts to complete the total conservation job on 57 million acres," Dole said. "This is a good beginning, but the job is far from complete. The critical conservation needs of the program area could not be met by the Dec. 31, 1971 expiration date.

"Continued effort is required to protect this vulnerable area from wind and water erosion. When the next extended drought occurs---an event we have learned to expect---the plains area should be as fully protected from the consequences as possible."