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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 29 --- U.S. Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kans.)

announced today the Senate approval of the joint conference report on the Rural Telephone Bank bill (Dole-Poage Act.)

"All that is necessary now," Dole said, "is for it to receive House approval and the signature of the President."

Dole, who introduced the measure early in this session, said he expects the House to act on the conference report on Monday.

Explaining the provisions of the legislation, Dole said:

The rural telephone bank bill, or as it is now known, the Dole-Poage Act, provides expanded financial assistance to rural telephone companies and cooperatives.

The Department of Agriculture estimates these small companies and cooperatives will need more than three billion dollars in loans in the next 15 years. At present, in addition to the 18 per cent of the rural residents without telephone service, more than one million of the present subscribers have more than two parties using their telephone lines.

Urging the conference report on the Senate floor today, the Kansas Senator said, "With this bill, our rural telephone systems can now have the financial backing they need to provide the telephone communications necessary to reach a rural-urban balance in America."