



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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SENATOR DOLE DISCUSSES MANDATORY FUEL ALLOCATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- In considering the discussion and concern expressed over the fuel crisis, I believe it is of the utmost importance to keep two basic factors in mind. First, we must understand which uses of energy are absolutely essential to the well being of the country. Second, we must take the steps to assure the necessary energy supplies for these essential activities. Of course, there are a number of fuel uses that are important, such as emergency services, activities to assure health, safety and communications, and the production of energy itself. However, one sector stands out above all others, and I am speaking of American agriculture.

Our agricultural operations -- planting, plowing, fertilizing, harvesting -- must be carried out according to nature's timetable, not man's. There is no flexibility or room for corrective action. And this is the danger of the present fuel situation. If fuel shortages keep the tractors and combines from running, there will be no crops. And if farmers cannot plant their crops or if the harvest is ruined or cut back, then we will face a monumental crisis in America.

This is not simply a regional problem, but one that concerns every American -- from the farmer in Kansas who wants to plant and harvest his crops to the housewife in New York City who wants a variety of products and reasonable prices at the supermarket.

A program for the allocation of crude oil and refinery products on a voluntary basis has been in effect for about 4 weeks. So far the results have been better than I expected. But I feel this program falls far short of meeting the full impact of fuel shortages which appear to be in prospect for the end of June

and early July. Voluntary guidelines and the threat of more stringent measures cannot guarantee the fuel out farmers must have. And even if violations of the voluntary guidelines were to be detected, I do not see how remedial action could come in time to do any good.

Therefore, I strongly supported the provisions of the Energy Bill which would place the allocation program on a mandatory basis.

As a matter of general principle, I do not believe the Federal Government should intrude too deeply into the private economic affairs of the nation. In this case the stakes are too high to take a chance that farmers -- and other important economic sectors as well--- will be guaranteed the fuel supplies they need.