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NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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DOLE SEEKS SPECIAL RULING ON UNUSED GASOLINE RESERVES

TOPEKA, KANSAS -- Senator Bob Dole today said he has requested a special ruling by the Federal Energy Office to permit Kansas to retain three-quarters of a million gallons of gasoline and undetermined amounts of other fuels which were not distributed by State officials during February.

In a letter to Energy Administrator William Simon the Kansas Senator explained that program deficiencies and start-up difficulties within State government were apparently responsible for failure to distribute almost a quarter of the State's emergency gasoline reserves for the month of February.

"Under current regulations any unused remainder of a State's monthly set-aside for hardships and emergencies is lost when the new month begins. But I believe in this case the actual hardship demand for fuel in Kansas could have easily exhausted the full February set-aside. Kansas should not be penalized because of weaknesses in a new program," Senator Dole said.

"The State program being administered from Topeka is evidently encountering some of the same problems as those being faced by the Federal Energy Office in Washington," Senator Dole said.

"I am sure that the Governor and other officials in Topeka will strive to improve the State government's performance in the coming months. But the fact remains that Kansas will lose three-quarters of a million gallons of gasoline unless the State program's February shortcomings are repaired by the ruling I seek."

The requested ruling would give Kansas a one-time exception and allow these unallocated fuel supplies to be carried forward into March and be added to this month's regular set-aside stocks for fuel emergencies.

"As spring agricultural operations and other demand begins to pick up, correction of this error could mean the difference between success and disaster in meeting the emergency requirements of farmers, communities, and motorists," Dole said.

Senator Dole also said he has renewed his request for a special 10-million gallon fuel allocation for Kansas. This step is being urged to assure fairness and equity for Kansas in the wake of allocation adjustments granted for other States during the month of February.

Senator Dole said that Kansans with fuel emergencies should contact his office immediately. "We will work through the State set-aside program first to arrange temporary relief and will coordinate with the Federal Energy Office to try to arrange for long-term allocation adjustments to prevent the emergency from arising again."