



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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AMTRAK PROVIDES PRELIMINARY DRAFT ON K.C.- TULSA PASSENGER ROUTE

Washington, D. C. -- Senator Bob Dole and Congressman Joe Skubitz commented on a preliminary draft report received today on the feasibility of a proposed Kansas City to Tulsa Amtrak passenger route. Dole said he was also expecting to receive further information on the Kansas City to Denver route proposal, since an on-site track inspection has now been completed.

Dole says, "the proposed Kansas City to Tulsa route appears, both to Congressman Skubitz and myself to have considerably more potential for ridership and for financial stability than this preliminary report indicates." The report, which predicts an annual operating loss of \$930,00 was characterized by Dole as "flawed by superficial research in some areas. AMTRAK acknowledges, for example, that the population figures used are inaccurate. In fact, they are way off base".

"The drafters of this report," says Skubitz, "don't know Kansas. There are four times more people in the cities this train would serve, than their report estimates." Skubitz added that "Amtrak estimates only 14,000 persons would ride the train. I don't know where they get that figure -- 54,000 persons were riding the Santa Fe when it was discontinued."

Dole and Skubitz pointed out that the report fails to take possible revenue from mail contracts into account. "Revenues from hauling mail could considerably offset other operating losses," the two agree, "and a \$930,000 loss estimate doesn't jibe at all with the fact that the Santa Fe, at a time it was discouraging passenger ridership, was losing only \$173,000 when their train was discontinued."

The on-site inspection of the Kansas City to Denver route has been completed, Amtrak has told Dole. "The inspection has given Amtrak an opportunity to view the condition of track and other equipment," Dole says. "The next step is to work up relatively precise cost estimates for any capital improvements which would have to be made if the line were put into operation."