



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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SPECIAL TO THE JOHNSON COUNTY SUN
MONDAY, JUNE 14, 1976

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DOLE AMENDMENT ASSURES PUBLIC VOICE ON HMO SELECTIONS

WASHINGTON, D. C.--The Senate today adopted an amendment by Senator Bob Dole to provide assurances that all interested parties have the opportunity to comment before a Health Maintenance Organization grant is made by the Secretary of HEW.

Dole said his amendment was offered in direct response to the situation which developed in Johnson County last fall when an \$800,000 contract was awarded to the Group Health Planning Council of Greater Kansas City. Several area doctors and mayors complained afterward that the controversial application had been "slipped through" without proper review and in spite of the Mid-America Regional Council's (MARC) vote of disapproval.

Under the terms of the Dole language, all mayors or similar local government officials; hospital administrators; medical societies; and public health planning agencies or councils in an area intended to be served by an HMO applicant would have to be individually notified in writing of a proposed grant. A public hearing would then be required, with all such concerned parties being invited and requested to submit written or oral recommendations.

Dole labeled his amendment as ". . . consistent with current trends in administrative law to guarantee maximum participation by interested individuals in agency decision making." He called attention to the fact that although HMO grants and contracts like the one in Kansas City amount to substantial sums and can have a significant impact on the area, relatively few provisions have been made for formal comment."

"That being the case," the Senator added, "it would appear that current legal requirements are clearly inadequate." Attached to House-passed legislation making other improvements in the HMO law, the Dole measure now goes to a joint Conference Committee for final resolution