



# NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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## DOLE SAYS NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE NOT THE ANSWER TO RISING HEALTH CARE COSTS

CRYSTAL RIVER, Fla. -- Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.) said today that adopting a comprehensive national health insurance plan is not the way to improve our current health care delivery system.

Dole spoke at the dedication of the Seven Rivers Community Hospital in Crystal River.

"I believe we all -- congressmen and senators, hospital administrators and doctors, the public -- must work to improve our present health care system, to make it more affordable to the American people," Dole said. "But I do not believe that now is the time to scrap it entirely and replace it with an untested, ambitious new scheme of medical care delivery which could fall prey to even worse cost and availability problems.

"I do not think it would be wise to embark upon a comprehensive national health insurance program until medical care cost inflation -- and inflation generally -- is brought under control. And there are many valid reasons why a comprehensive health care scheme should not be enacted even after inflation abates.

"For even in stable economic times, I am not convinced that we can devise a comprehensive national health insurance program that can fully cover all the medical care needs of all of our people without committing more dollars than our nation can afford and without bringing the health care delivery system in America to a grinding halt,"

Dole stated that current proposals for national health insurance do not adequately address the central issues of rising health delivery costs and inadequate health care for some individuals.

"In my opinion," he said, "the answer to the hospital cost escalation dilemma is not to isolate hospital costs from the marketplace by arbitrarily limiting increases in hospital revenues.

"An arbitrary cost containment policy which fails to take account of real differences between hospitals and their unique fiscal needs could be disastrous. And it could penalize hospitals with sound medical and management practices."

Dole said he was urging Congress to adopt the plan for catastrophic health insurance that he and Sens. Long, Ribicoff and Talmadge are sponsoring to protect families from the financial disaster that can strike because of a catastrophic illness.