

# BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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## DOLE WANTS END TO JUDGESHIP AGE DISCRIMINATION

WASHINGTON ...Senator Bob Dole (R-Kansas) today called for an end to age discrimination for federal judgeships.

"As a matter of policy, the American Bar Association's standing committee on the Federal Judiciary has held that 'an individual 60 years of age or older is not recommended for an initial appointment to a lifetime Federal Judgeship unless in excellent health and evaluated as 'well qualified' or 'exceptionally well qualified.' In no event are persons over 64 recommended for initial appointment." The Department of Justice is in general agreement with this policy. I find this policy to be unconscionable. In essence, an entire class of competent individuals is prevented from serving on the Federal Bench," said Dole, as member of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

### EQUAL JUSTICE

"To my knowledge, there is no evidence that proves that persons over 60 years of age are not fit to be federal judges. I find it ironic that in a country whose legal system is based on the notion of equal justice under law, age discrimination is allowed to flourish. People who are older than 60 are unfairly prohibited from being federal judges. These persons are no less wise, honest, sincere, or intelligent than other attorneys, but for reasons that are unknown to me, these lawyers are not recommended to the Bench. It is inconceivable that this discriminatory policy is practiced by lawyers, individuals who are intimately familiar with the laws of our land. In my opinion, the hallmark of a good judge is character, integrity, experience, and ability, certainly not age. To have age effectively serve as the sole criterion, is such a simplistic approach that it is almost laughable. Age discrimination is as offensive as discrimination because of race or sex or national origin. Congress has taken stringent measures to eradicate these forms of discrimination in the United States," said Dole.

### AS AN INDIVIDUAL

"Quite naturally there are attorneys who are older than 60 who are not qualified to be federal judges, but the Committee on the Judiciary reviews each nominee as an individual to determine if our high standards are satisfied. Just as there are persons over 60 years old who are unqualified, there are persons under 60 who are unqualified. The ABA should not fail to recommend qualified lawyers because of their age.

### DAY BY DAY

"Day by day our youth oriented society is growing older. In the year 2000, 3.9 percent of the population will be between the ages of 60 and 64, and persons older than 65 will comprise 12.2 percent of the population," said the Kansas Senator.

"We cannot afford to overlook a pool of qualified and diverse individuals as candidates for the Bench. Older individuals possess a wealth of experience and information. This country's legal history is replete with examples of distinguished jurists who serve over the age of 60.

### THE ESSENCE

"Emerson said, 'The essence of age is intellect.' It could be said that the essence of a good judge is intellect," said Dole.

"I urge my colleagues to join me in repudiating this anachronistic policy of the ABA," he concluded.