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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 1980

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SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE OVERWHELMINGLY APPROVES DOLE-ROTH RESOLUTION TO BLOCK OIL FEE

WASHINGTON -- The Senate Finance Committee today overwhelmingly approved a resolution by Senators Bob Dole (R-Kan.) and Bill Roth (R-Del.) to block implementation of President Carter's oil import fee. The vote was 14-4.

Finance Committee senators agreed to report the bill out of committee, but they must await House action on their version of the resolution before taking it to the Senate floor.

"Federal Judge Aubrey Robinson's timely ruling yesterday was an important step in halting the implementation of the oil fee," Dole said. "But the majority of us in the Senate believe that it is necessary to proceed quickly to ensure that we have exhausted all possible legislative avenues to stop it.

"Despite the decisiveness of the court ruling, I feel the action today in the Finance Committee could help avoid more legal wrangling over this issue. Appeals are already underway, and I think it is crucial that the legislative process proceed quickly in order to avert lawsuits which, in the end, could cost consumers thousands of dollars.

"This vote is a re-affirmation of my belief that Congress never saw the fee as anything other than another tax on the American people. It will not conserve oil in significant amounts. It will not help to slow inflation. But it will put millions of dollars of consumers' money into the federal treasury. In my view, this is the wrong way to attempt to balance the budget."

The Dole-Roth resolution, S.J. Res. 159, currently has 35 Senate cosponsors.