

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

2213 Dirksen Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1980

CONTACT: BILL KATS
(202) 224-6521

DOLE CALLS FOR QUICK ACTION TO FREE STALLED VETERANS EDUCATION CHECKS

WASHINGTON -- In an effort to speed delivery of approximately \$40 million in veterans education aid checks now stalled awaiting approval of a congressional appropriation request, Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan.) today wrote to Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Warren Magnuson (D-Wash.) urging immediate action by the committee.

The Veterans Administration is currently withholding payment to some 128,000 veterans whose aid requests were cleared after Aug. 28, and unless Congress acts on the appropriations request quickly, thousands of Vietnam-era veterans expecting their checks early next month may not get them.

In the letter to Magnuson, Dole said, "It is my understanding that the VA submitted a \$40-million supplemental appropriations request to the Office of Management and Budget several months ago but it was not submitted to Congress until yesterday. To ask the veteran who served his country honorably and who has earned this benefit to put his life and the lives of his dependents on 'hold' because of bureaucratic 'bungling' is the ultimate slap in the face to our veterans.

"Knowing we both share the same concern for the well-being of our veterans and their dependents, and particularly the veteran and his dependents who depend on the GI Bill to cover not only the cost of education but also subsistence, I offer you my strong support for immediate action on this supplemental appropriations request."

If Congress acts quickly, Dole said, most of the waiting veterans may get their checks on time. But if the special request is delayed, nothing will be processed until the beginning of October, when the new fiscal year begins. In that case, veterans would not get their checks until the middle of October. But even if the supplemental appropriation is approved early next week, there almost certainly will be some delay for veterans expecting special advance payments later this month to help cover tuition bills for the coming term.