

BOB DOLE



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DOLE ASKS THAT SOLAR ENERGY FUNDS BE RESTORED

WASHINGTON -- Senator Bob Dole (R.-Kansas) today spoke out in favor of restoring funding for solar projects: "I send to the desk an unprinted amendment and ask for its immediate consideration. I am pleased to have Senators Kassebaum, Goldwater, McGovern, and Matsunaga join me in attempting to restore much-needed funds for the development of solar energy," Dole said.

"The intent of this amendment is quite simple and straight forward. Those of us who support the restoration of \$3.75 million for community solar demonstration projects feel very strongly that solar energy is an integral ingredient in any overall national energy program. Now there has been some concern that due to the fact that these funds were cut in a House subcommittee and not restored, bring debate by the full House that there is little hope the funds will be retained if this bill goes to conference. Well, I can assure my colleagues, as most are already aware, none can accurately predict what will ever come out of a conference committee. It would be irresponsible for this body to act on the premise that the other body won't go along with our decision. We have never been guided by that premise before, and we must not be guided by it today," Dole said.

"At a time when all are asking for as much budget restraint as possible, \$3.75 million may seem like a large sum, but when that figure is related to bringing about energy independence for our nation, it is a very small sum indeed. If this Congress can appropriate \$88 billion for a massive synthetic fuels program, can we in good conscience deny the appropriation of \$3.75 million for community solar projects?"

"Mr. President, virtually every form of energy sold in this country with the notable exception of solar energy has received massive federal subsidies for development, transmission, and use. Nuclear power, for example, has received a generation's worth of government-sponsored research and development at no metered cost to those buying electricity from a nuclear power plant. Every stage of the nuclear fuel cycle from the enrichment of uranium to the disposal of radioactive waste continues to receive federal subsidies," said Dole.

"When the House passed the Energy and Water Appropriation Bill, the \$3.75 million requested for the small community demonstration project planned by the Department of Energy for fiscal year 1981 were deleted. Last week the Senate Appropriations Committee followed suit and the funds were not restored. I am asking for your help in getting these funds restored.

"A transition to solar resources as a major energy source must be catalyzed by federal incentives. Americans are beginning to appreciate the social, environmental, and economic advantages of solar energy. Recent polls suggest that in an era when most new energy sources are deeply embattled with a hostile public 94 percent of the American people favor the rapid development of solar sources.

"Economic history demonstrates that two major energy transitions have swept the United States in the last 125 years. First, coal replaced wood as the dominant source of commercial energy. Then coal itself was displaced by oil and gas. Both these changeovers occurred in a short period of time. In 1850 coal contributed only 10 percent of the United States' energy supply; just thirty-five years later, it provided more than half the nation's fuel. In 1910 less than 10 percent of the United States' energy supply came from oil and gas; thirty-five years later oil and gas accounted for half the nation's energy," Dole said.