

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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DOLE URGES SENATE LEADERSHIP TO TAKE UP FAIR HOUSING AMENDMENTS BEFORE ADJOURNMENT

WASHINGTON-- Senator Bob Dole (R.-Kansas) and five GOP colleagues have written letters to the Democratic and Republican leadership asking that they bring the Fair Housing Bill before the full Senate as early as possible.

Dole, who was one of two Republicans to support the Fair Housing legislation in the Senate Judiciary Committee in August, sent the letters to Majority Leader Sen. Robert Byrd (D-W.Vir.) and Minority Leader Sen. Howard Baker (R.-Tenn.).

"The time for action on this legislation is clearly upon us," the letter said. "Delay would only reflect poorly on the Senate's commitment to this important Civil Rights issue."

Others besides Senator Dole signing the letter were: Sen. John Heinz (R.-PA); Sen. Jacob Javits (R.-N.Y.); Sen. Charles McC. Mathias, Jr. (R.-MD); Sen. Robert Stafford (R.-VT); Sen. Lowell Weicker (R.-CN).

Fair Housing Amendments Act

The Fair Housing Amendments Act (S.506) was reported out of the Judiciary Committee. S.506 gives the Department of Housing and Urban Development the authority to enforce housing discrimination law by empowering HUD to investigate complaints, conduct hearings and issue remedial orders.

Currently, HUD only has the authority to mediate disputes in housing cases. HUD lacks the authority to settle those cases or punish anyone.

Additionally, S.506 grants handicapped individuals the same protection that is afforded to other protected classes under the Housing discrimination law.

Senator Dole is a co-sponsor of S.506. He supported a key amendment to the bill that empowered administrative law judges within the executive branch to hear complaints and issue orders, subject to review by a Commission and Appeals courts, as is the procedure in regulatory agencies.

An alternate procedure was considered that would put the whole enforcement process in the Federal courts, starting with hearings before magistrates, leading to jury trials. This proposal failed.

Talking Points

- Administrative law judges will be faster and less expensive than the court route.
- Administrative law judges will build up an expertise that will assure fairness.
- Presently twenty-six federal agencies effectively use administrative law judges.
- Racial discrimination in housing has been forbidden by federal law since 1968, but currently the government has no powers beyond mediation to enforce these laws.
- Present law makes it pointless for a citizen to pursue a claim of housing discrimination.
- Court actions are slow and complicated, administrative law judges will streamline the process and offer an effective solution to this age old problem.

The Honorable Howard H. Baker, Jr.
Senate Minority Leader
S 227 Capitol
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Minority Leader:

As cosponsors of the Fair Housing bill, S.506, we are writing to urge the early scheduling of this landmark legislation for floor debate.

This is the second Congress in which this legislation has been introduced by Senator Mathias. In this Congress, the bill was introduced on March 2, 1979, and was the subject of five days of hearings, and was favorably reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee on August 26, 1980.

The time for action on this legislation is clearly upon us. Delay would only reflect poorly on our party's commitment to this important civil rights issue.

We urge you to take an active role in bringing this legislation to the Senate floor before the recess.

Sincerely,

Heinz

Mathias

Stafford

Dole

Javits

Weicker

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd
Senate Majority Leader
A 207 Capitol
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Majority Leader:

As cosponsors of the Fair Housing bill, S. 506, we are writing to urge the early scheduling of this landmark legislation for floor debate.

This is the second Congress in which this legislation has been introduced by Senator Mathias. In this Congress, the bill was introduced on March 2, 1979, and was the subject of five days of hearings, and was favorably reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee on August 26, 1980.

The President, in his State of the Union address, has called for passage of this legislation as his "highest legislative priority in the area of civil rights."

The time for action on this legislation is clearly upon us. Delay would only reflect poorly on the Senate's commitment to this important civil rights issue.

We urge you to take an active role in bringing this legislation to the Senate floor before the recess.

Sincerely,

John Heinz

Charles McC. Mathias, Jr.

Robert T. Stafford

Robert Dole

Jacob K. Javits

Lowell P. Weicker