

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

SH 141 Hart Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 1986

CONTACT: WALT RIKER, DALE TATE
(202) 224-3135

DOLE: PAST TIME FOR A BALANCED BUDGET

WASHINGTON -- SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB DOLE, SAYING IT'S "PAST TIME FOR A BALANCED BUDGET", URGED THE SENATE TO FOLLOW THE LEAD OF THE PEOPLE AND SAY YES TO A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO BALANCE THE FEDERAL BUDGET. "THIS CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IS ESSENTIAL TO THE LONG-TERM FISCAL HEALTH OF THIS NATION," DOLE SAID.

"THE AMERICAN PEOPLE CLEARLY ARE CONVINCED THAT OUR FISCAL HOUSE IS NOT IN ORDER. POPULAR CONCERN OVER RUNAWAY BUDGETS IS THE REASON WHY THE DRIVE FOR A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION TO DRAFT A FISCAL RESTRAINT AMENDMENT IS ONLY A FEW STATES SHORT OF ITS GOAL. POLLS CONSISTENTLY SHOW THAT 70-80% OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE SUPPORT A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT. NO ONE SHOULD MAINTAIN THAT WE OUGHT TO TAKE CERTAIN STEPS JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE POPULAR; BUT IN THIS CASE IT SEEMS THAT THE PEOPLE ARE AHEAD OF THE POLITICIANS. THEY UNDERSTAND THAT CONGRESSIONAL SPENDING HABITS HAVE TO BE PUT UNDER A FIRM LIMITATION, AND THAT ONLY NEW PROCEDURES, EXTERNALLY IMPOSED, CAN DO THE JOB," DOLE SAID.

"SO THE SENATE IS BEING PRESENTED WITH AN HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY. THIS PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT WOULD RESTORE A PROPER BALANCE TO THE WAY WE CONDUCT THE FISCAL AFFAIRS OF THE GOVERNMENT. THE PROPOSAL BEFORE US IS NOT A QUICK FIX, A RESPONSE TO A SUDDEN SHIFT IN PUBLIC OPINION, OR AN ATTEMPT TO EVADE OUR ASSIGNED DUTIES UNDER THE CONSTITUTION WITH REGARD TO DECISIONS ON TAXING AND SPENDING. THIS IS AN IDEA THAT HAS BEEN AROUND FOR QUITE SOME TIME, BUT THAT HAS GAINED MOMENTUM IN RECENT YEARS BECAUSE OF THE GROWING REALIZATION THAT THERE IS SOMETHING FUNDAMENTALLY WRONG WITH THE WAY WE CONDUCT FISCAL POLICY."

"THIS AMENDMENT, IF APPROVED BY CONGRESS, IS NOT THE END OF THE STORY. IT IS THE BEGINNING. LEGISLATIVE IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE WILL BE A COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT MATTER -- WE SHOULD NOT DECEIVE OURSELVES ON THAT POINT. AND WE ARE LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF THE GRAMM-RUDMAN-HOLLINGS LAW THAT ENFORCEMENT IS NOT A SIMPLE MATTER. BUT IT CAN AND WILL BE DONE ONCE WE HAVE A CLEAR CONSTITUTIONAL OBLIGATION TO FULFILL. WE CAN DEMONSTRATE OUR WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON THIS AMENDMENT BY MOVING SWIFTLY TO MEET THE FISCAL 1987 TARGETS FOR GRAMM-RUDMAN," DOLE SAID.