

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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STATEMENT OF SENATOR DOLE
TRADE BILL VETO

THE OMNIBUS TRADE BILL FAILS THE "TRUTH IN ADVERTISING" TEST. IT IS NOT DEVOTED SOLELY TO IMPROVING OUR COUNTRY'S TRADE AND COMPETITIVENESS. WITH A CONFERENCE REPORT TOTTALLING 1115 PAGES, THE MOST DESCRIPTIVE WORD IN THE TITLE IS "OMNIBUS."

THE BASIC PROBLEM WITH THIS LEGISLATION IS IT DOESN'T FOCUS ON IMPROVING OUR INTERNATIONAL TRADE POSTURE. INSTEAD, IT IS A GRAB BAG OF PROVISIONS OF QUESTIONABLE MERIT.

THE PLANT CLOSING MANDATORY NOTICE PROVISION IS PROBABLY THE MOST OBVIOUS OF THESE PROVISIONS. THE PLANT CLOSING PROVISION IS A SO-CALLED "PEOPLE" ISSUE THAT IS EASY TO DESCRIBE IN A FEW WORDS. AS A RESULT, IT -- NOT THE SOMEWHAT ARCAINE TRADE PROVISIONS -- IS WHAT HAS RECEIVED ALL THE MEDIA ATTENTION.

LET ME SAY RIGHT UP FRONT, I DON'T OPPOSE THE CONCEPT OF GIVING EMPLOYEES NOTICE WHEN A PLANT IS ABOUT TO BE CLOSED OR WHEN A MAJOR LAYOFF IS GOING TO OCCUR.

BUT IT SEEMS TO ME THAT HOW THIS IS HANDLED IS BETTER LEFT TO THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PROCESS. WHAT MAKES US THINK THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS BETTER AT DETERMINING WHAT APPROPRIATE NOTICE SHOULD BE THAN THE PARTIES WHO ARE ACTUALLY INVOLVED?

THE PLANT CLOSING PROVISION IS ONLY ONE OF MANY OUT-OF-PLACE, OR MISGUIDED PROVISIONS. HOWEVER, THIS LEGISLATION ALSO CONTAINS A NUMBER OF GOOD PROVISIONS. IT WOULD EXTEND THE PRESIDENT'S AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE MULTILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENTS. AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE LEGISLATION ALSO STRENGTHENS THE ABILITY OF OUR CITIZENS TO BE TREATED FAIRLY IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETPLACE.

THE LEGISLATION WOULD ALSO REPEAL THE "WINDFALL PROFIT" TAX -- A MISNAMED AND MISGUIDED PIECE OF LEGISLATION WHICH SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN ENACTED. I HELPED LEAD THE FIGHT AGAINST ENACTMENT IN 1979 AND 1980 AND HAVE WORKED CONSISTENTLY EVER SINCE FOR REPEAL. THAT REPEAL IS LONG OVERDUE.

I ENCOURAGE MY COLLEAGUES TO SUSTAIN THE PRESIDENT'S VETO. BUT, I ALSO SINCERELY HOPE THAT WE WILL HAVE A TRADE BILL THIS YEAR. THAT TRADE BILL CAN BE BASED ON THIS LEGISLATION, BUT JUST STRIPPING THE PLANT CLOSING PROVISION AND LEAVING THE REST OF THE BILL INTACT IS NOT ENOUGH. IMPROVEMENTS CAN BE MADE. BUT MOST CAN BE ACHIEVED BY SIMPLY STRIKING OUT PROVISIONS. IF WE TRULY WANT A GOOD, EFFECTIVE TRADE BILL THIS YEAR, WE HAVE THE TIME TO DO IT.