

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE, BURDICK CALL FOR ACTION;
RURAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS INFUSION OF RESOURCES

WASHINGTON - The future appears grim for health care in rural America, according to a Congressional report released by Senate Rural Health Caucus Co-Chairs Senator Robert Dole (R-Ks) and Senator Quentin Burdick (D-ND).

"It is unfortunate that while most of the country heads towards the 21st century, rural America is still stuck in the early 20th Century when it comes to quality health care. Congress should act quickly on these recommendations -- there can be no revitalization of rural America unless we guarantee better health care for our rural neighbors," said Dole.

"Despite some improvements in the last two decades, rural health care desperately needs an infusion of resources," Burdick said. "This comprehensive study shows that rural populations face unique barriers to health care. Congress must act to break down the barriers and guarantee that all Americans have access to health care services."

The Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) issued its 530-page report Health Care in Rural America last week. OTA concluded that federal coordination, technical assistance and information are crucial to states and communities trying to address their rural health needs. The report indicates the Government should continue to augment rural health resources to areas that have chronic difficulty providing services and recruiting personnel.

Among OTA's findings are that:

- Despite slightly lower mortality rates, rural residents have higher rates of chronic disease and disability than urban residents.

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