

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

DOLE TESTIMONY: CAMPAIGN REFORM MUST BE BIPARTISAN TO BE CREDIBLE; DELAYING ENACTMENT PAST '94 ONLY INVITES SKEPTICISM

WASHINGTON -- SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE (R-KANSAS) TODAY SUBMITTED THE FOLLOWING TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE RULES COMMITTEE HEARING ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM:

MR. CHAIRMAN, MR. VICE-CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE: THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME THIS OPPORTUNITY TO OFFER SOME REMARKS ABOUT THE IMPORTANT SUBJECT OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM.

THIS SUBJECT HAS BEEN SO FREQUENTLY DISCUSSED, SO WORKED OVER DURING THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS HERE IN THE SENATE, THAT ONE WONDERS WHETHER THERE IS ANYTHING NEW TO SAY.

WHAT IS NEW IS THAT THE CREDIBILITY OF CONGRESS WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IS AT AN ALL-TIME LOW.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE FED UP--FED UP WITH A CONGRESS THEY VIEW AS UNRESPONSIVE AND OUT-OF-TOUCH, AND FED UP WITH A CAMPAIGN FINANCE SYSTEM THEY VIEW AS FUELED PRIMARILY BY SPECIAL INTERESTS.

IF CONGRESS IS TO RESTORE ITS CREDIBILITY WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, THEN PASSING COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM MUST BE A TOP PRIORITY THIS YEAR.

AND TO ENSURE THAT THE CREDIBILITY OF REFORM LEGISLATION IS NOT IN ANY WAY DIMINISHED, ITS CRAFTING MUST BE DONE ON A BIPARTISAN BASIS.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DON'T WANT A POLITICAL DOCUMENT.

THEY WANT A DOCUMENT THEY CAN TRUST--ONE THAT ENJOYS BROAD BIPARTISAN--AND NONPARTISAN--SUPPORT.

THE REPUBLICAN APPROACH

MR. CHAIRMAN, SENATE REPUBLICANS HAVE CONTINUED TO BE IN THE FOREFRONT OF THE CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM EFFORT.

EARLIER THIS YEAR, I JOINED MY DISTINGUISHED COLLEAGUE SENATOR MCCONNELL AND 22 OTHER SENATE REPUBLICANS IN INTRODUCING S.7, THE COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM ACT OF 1993.

S.7 REDUCES THE INFLUENCE OF SPECIAL INTERESTS BY BANNING POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEES.

IT ENHANCES POLITICAL COMPETITION BY GIVING VIABLE CHALLENGERS EARLY "SEED MONEY"--UP TO \$100,000--AND BY PROHIBITING FRANKED MASS MAILINGS DURING ELECTION YEARS.

IT REDUCES THE COST OF ELECTIONS BY PROVIDING A MEANINGFUL BROADCAST DISCOUNT.

IT RESTORES INTEGRITY TO THE CAMPAIGN PROCESS BY BANNING SO-CALLED "SOFT MONEY," THOSE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS THAT NOW ESCAPE

(MORE)

THE DISCLOSURE AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS OF CURRENT CAMPAIGN LAW.

AND S.7 HELPS TO ENSURE THAT CAMPAIGNS ARE FINANCED PRIMARILY BY THE PEOPLE WHO SHOULD COUNT MOST--OUR CONSTITUENTS-- BY REDUCING FROM \$1,000 TO \$500 THE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE CONTRIBUTION OF INDIVIDUALS RESIDING OUTSIDE A CANDIDATE'S HOME STATE.

THESE REFORMS, IF ADOPTED, WOULD RADICALLY OVERHAUL OUR CURRENT SYSTEM OF FINANCING CAMPAIGNS. THEY WOULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

NO ILLUSIONS

NOW, MR. CHAIRMAN, I HAVE NO ILLUSIONS THAT S. 7 WILL BE THE BILL REPORTED OUT OF THIS COMMITTEE.

I ALSO HAVE NO ILLUSIONS THAT REFORM LEGISLATION CAN BE DRAFTED ON A BIPARTISAN BASIS.

WE HAVE RUN AROUND THIS TRACK SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE, AND EACH TIME WE HAVE FAILED TO REACH THE BIPARTISAN FINISH LINE.

WE EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO APPOINT A BIPARTISAN COMMISSION OF OUTSIDE EXPERTS TO DEVELOP SOME RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REFORM.

UNFORTUNATELY, THESE RECOMMENDATIONS WERE LARGELY IGNORED.

BUT, MR. CHAIRMAN, DESPITE THESE PAST FAILURES, I AM NOT PREPARED TO THROW IN THE TOWEL.

I AM NOT PREPARED TO SAY THAT THE TWO MAIN DIFFERENCES SEPARATING US--SPENDING LIMITS AND PUBLIC FINANCING--ARE IRRECONCILABLE, BEYOND COMPROMISE.

OBVIOUSLY, BRIDGING THESE DIFFERENCES WILL TAKE SOME MOVEMENT FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE AISLE.

PERHAPS IT WILL TAKE A LITTLE COURAGE TOO.

BUT I AM CONVINCED THAT CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM LEGISLATION CAN SUCCEED AND WIN THE TRUST OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, ONLY IF IT IS DRAFTED--IN GOOD FAITH--BY REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS ALIKE.

PERSISTENCE IN THIS EFFORT CAN INDEED PAY OFF.

FORGET THE GIMMICKS

FINALLY, MR. CHAIRMAN, THERE HAS BEEN SOME TALK THAT ANY REFORM LEGISLATION PASSED THIS YEAR WON'T APPLY TO THE UPCOMING 1994 ELECTION CYCLE.

IN MY VIEW, DELAYING THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE LEGISLATION BEYOND THE 1994 CYCLE WOULD ONLY INVITE THE SKEPTICISM OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

I URGE YOU AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE TO REJECT THESE OBVIOUSLY SELF-INTERESTED DELAYING TACTICS AND ADOPT REFORM LEGISLATION THAT IS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AREN'T INTERESTED IN GIMMICKS, AND YOU CAN BET, THEY ARE WATCHING WHAT WE DO.

MR. CHAIRMAN, MR. VICE CHAIRMAN, THANK YOU FOR YOUR COURTESY THIS MORNING AND I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU BOTH AS REFORM LEGISLATION MOVES THROUGH THE SENATE.

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