

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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MOTOR VOTER

DON'T SOCK STATES WITH ANOTHER UNFUNDED WASHINGTON MANDATE

WASHINGTON -- SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE (R-KANSAS) TODAY MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT ON THE SENATE FLOOR REGARDING THE DEMOCRATS' "MOTOR VOTER" BILL:

EARLIER THIS YEAR, CONGRESS PASSED A FAMILY LEAVE BILL THAT WILL COST BUSINESSES HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS.

YESTERDAY, THE SENATE PASSED AN UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BILL RAISING THE DEFICIT BY \$5.8 BILLION...BUT DIDN'T OFFER A SINGLE WAY TO FINANCE THIS NEW DEBT.

AND NOW, WE'RE DEBATING SO-CALLED MOTOR-VOTER LEGISLATION THAT SAYS TO THE 50 STATES--"REFORM YOUR VOTER REGISTRATION PROCEDURES, COMPLY WITH OUR MANDATES, BUT DON'T COME TO US WHEN IT'S TIME TO PAY THE BILL."

AND IF YOUR STATE IS BROKE AND CAN'T COMPLY WITH OUR REQUIREMENTS, THEN "TOUGH." THAT'S NOT OUR PROBLEM. IT'S YOURS.

NO ONE IS AGAINST HELPING FAMILIES WITH MEDICAL EMERGENCIES ... OR ASSISTING THOSE AMERICANS WHO ARE OUT OF WORK ... OR ENCOURAGING MORE PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. THAT'S NOT THE POINT.

THE POINT IS THAT WE'RE GROWN-UPS: IF WE WANT THE GOODIES, WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO PAY FOR THEM.

IF WE WANT AN EXTENSION OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS, THEN FINE, LET'S FIND THE MONEY TO FUND IT.

AND IF WE WANT THE STATES TO ADOPT NEW VOTER REGISTRATION PROCEDURES, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO SAY THAT FUNDING IS AVAILABLE.

CLINTON'S PLEDGE -- AND HIS NEW MANDATES

LAST JUNE, CANDIDATE BILL CLINTON TOLD THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS THAT "I AM GOING TO STOP HANDING DOWN MANDATES TO YOU AND REGULATING YOU TO DEATH."

THESE WORDS WERE WARMLY RECEIVED, AND IT'S NO WONDER.

THE MAYORS, AND COUNTY EXECUTIVES, AND STATE OFFICIALS THROUGHOUT AMERICA UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS WHEN WASHINGTON CALLS.

IT MEANS ADDED EXPENSE, ADDED REGULATION, AND ADDED AGGRAVATION--SO THINK TWICE BEFORE YOU PICK UP THE PHONE.

UNFORTUNATELY, NOW THAT HE HAS MADE IT TO THE WHITE HOUSE, PRESIDENT CLINTON IS SINGING A DIFFERENT TUNE.

WE'VE HAD THE FAMILY LEAVE MANDATE.

WE'VE HAD THE \$5.8 BILLION INCREASE IN THE DEFICIT--A MANDATE ON OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN WHO, ULTIMATELY, WILL PAY THE PRICE FOR THIS ACT OF FISCAL IRRESPONSIBILITY.

AND NOW WE HAVE THE MOTOR-VOTER MANDATE.

(MORE)

TAX SPEND MANDATE THAT'S THE GREAT NEW VISION FOR CHANGE.

GIVING CONGRESS A BAD NAME

I ASK MY FRIENDS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF AISLE: HOW WOULD YOU LIKE THE STATES TO PAY FOR THIS LEGISLATION? DO YOU WANT THEM TO CUT THEIR EDUCATION BUDGETS? HOW ABOUT THEIR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS? CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS, PERHAPS? OR MAYBE WE SHOULD TELL THEM TO RAISE THEIR STATE TAXES, AND PASS ALONG THE COSTS TO THE TAXPAYERS?

NO ONE IS AGAINST INCREASING VOTER REGISTRATION.

THE MORE PEOPLE WHO VOTE, THE BETTER FOR OUR DEMOCRACY.

BUT THE BEST WAY TO GET PEOPLE TO VOTE IS TO CONVINCING THEM THAT CONGRESS IS A CREDIBLE INSTITUTION, THAT WE CAN CONDUCT OUR AFFAIRS RESPONSIBLY AND WITHOUT GIMMICKS.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE MOTOR-VOTER BILL FLUNKS THE CREDIBILITY TEST.

AS COLUMNIST DAVID BRODER RECENTLY WROTE, "THIS LEGISLATION IS THE KIND OF UNDERFUNDED, OVERHYPED LEGISLATION THAT GIVES CONGRESS AND WASHINGTON A BAD NAME."

MY COLLEAGUES ON THIS SIDE OF THE AISLE WILL MAKE OTHER ARGUMENTS AGAINST THIS BILL--THE POTENTIAL FOR FRAUD, THE POSSIBILITY OF COERCION WITH AGENCY-BASED REGISTRATION, THE VERY FRAGILE LINKAGE BETWEEN VOTER REGISTRATION AND VOTER PARTICIPATION.

THESE PROBLEMS ARE REAL. THEY ARE NOT IMAGINARY.

THE CREDIT CARD MENTALITY

BUT, MY BIGGEST CONCERN IS WITH CONGRESS'S CREDIT-CARD MENTALITY.

WE SEEM TO THINK WE CAN COME UP WITH ANY IDEA, NO MATTER HOW EXPENSIVE, AND JUST CHARGE IT--CHARGE IT TO BUSINESS, CHARGE IT TO FUTURE GENERATIONS, AND WITH THIS BILL, CHARGE IT TO THE STATES AND LOCALITIES.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, MANY OF OUR COLLEAGUES IN STATE GOVERNMENT FEEL THAT THIS LEGISLATION IS UNNECESSARY, FRAUGHT WITH THE POTENTIAL FOR FRAUD, AND INORDINATELY EXPENSIVE.

GOVERNORS, COUNTIES, CITIES & TOWNS OPPOSED

PERHAPS THAT'S WHY THE NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION, THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES, THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TOWNS AND TOWNSHIPS, AND THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES HAVE ALL REGISTERED THEIR OPPOSITION.

I HAVE ALSO RECEIVED NUMEROUS LETTERS FROM STATE AND LOCAL OFFICIALS WHO HAVE TOLD ME THAT THIS BILL WILL INTERFERE WITH THEIR ONGOING EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO THE BALLOT IN THEIR RESPECTIVE STATES.

FOR ONCE, I URGE MY COLLEAGUES TO LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE WHO WILL HAVE TO LIVE WITH WHAT WE LEGISLATE.

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