

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION
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YOU ARE MEETING THIS WEEK IN THE CITY THAT WAS HOME TO MANY OF AMERICA'S EARLY LEADERS. AND WHEN THESE FOUNDING FATHERS PUT TOGETHER OUR CONSTITUTION, THEY UNDERSTOOD THE FACT THAT STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS WERE OFTEN IN A MUCH BETTER POSITION TO UNDERSTAND AND RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT HAS ALMOST TURNED INTO A ONE WAY STREET -- WITH WASHINGTON, D.C. DICTATING WHAT YOU CAN AND CANNOT DO, AND FORCING YOU TO PICK UP THE TAB FOR AN ENDLESS STRING OF UNFUNDED MANDATES.

THE COSTS OF THOSE MANDATES ARE DEVASTATING FINANCIALLY, AND DEVASTATING IN TERMS OF BLOCKING YOUR ABILITY TO DEVELOP INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND SOLUTIONS.

AND IF THERE'S ONE THING THAT CONGRESS COULD DO TO RESTORE BALANCE TO THE FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONSHIP, IT WOULD BE TO PASS S993 -- THE KEMPTHORNE-GLENN BILL, WHICH IS NOW AWAITING ACTION ON THE SENATE FLOOR.

THE LEGISLATION WAS COMPROMISED IN COMMITTEE, BUT IT IS STILL A BIG STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

SENATOR MITCHELL SAID HERE ON SUNDAY THE CHANCES OF HIS BRINGING THIS BILL UP DEPENDED UPON WHETHER OR NOT REPUBLICANS "BEHAVED PROPERLY" IN OTHER DEBATES.

I RESPECT SENATOR MITCHELL, BUT TO USE A TERM HE SOON MAY BE FAMILIAR WITH, THERE IS NO NEED TO KEEP S. 993 WAITING IN "THE ON DECK CIRCLE." THE BILL HAS OVERWHELMING SUPPORT, AND IT COULD BE PASSED VERY QUICKLY -- TOMORROW, FOR INSTANCE.

THE FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONSHIP IS ALSO AT THE CORE OF THE ONGOING DEBATES OVER HEALTH CARE, WELFARE REFORM, AND CRIME. AND LET ME TOUCH UPON THOSE ISSUES NOW.

HEALTH CARE

I BEGIN WITH HEALTH CARE -- AND NOTE THE ABSENCE OF GOVERNOR EDGAR. AS YOU KNOW, JIM UNDERWENT EMERGENCY QUADRUPLE BYPASS SURGERY A WEEK AND A HALF AGO. I SPOKE WITH JIM LAST WEEK, AND HE IS WELL ON THE WAY TO RECOVERY.

JIM LEARNED FIRST HAND WHAT GOVERNOR CASEY ALSO LEARNED NOT LONG AGO -- AND THAT'S THE FACT THAT AMERICA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

(more)

IS THE BEST IN THE WORLD -- PERFORMING NEAR MIRACLES EVERY DAY.

AND WHEN WE BEGAN THIS DEBATE ON A BI-PARTISAN BASIS, DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS ALIKE SHARED THE SAME GOAL: DOING ALL WE COULD TO ENSURE THAT EVERY AMERICAN HAD ACCESS TO THAT HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.

THAT WAS THE PRESIDENT'S GOAL. THAT WAS MY GOAL. AND I KNOW IT WAS YOUR GOAL, AS WELL.

BUT, IN REACHING THIS GOAL, IT WAS ALSO IMPORTANT TO KEEP SOME THINGS IN MIND.

THE PRICE OF HEALTH CARE REFORM SHOULD NOT BE THE COMPLETE TAKEOVER OF ONE-SEVENTH OF THE ECONOMY BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND A NEW BURDEN ON MIDDLE CLASS AMERICANS.

THE PRICE OF HEALTH CARE REFORM SHOULD NOT BE THE LOSS OF MILLIONS OF JOBS.

THE PRICE OF HEALTH CARE REFORM SHOULD NOT BE BANKRUPTING THE STATES OR BANKRUPTING OUR CHILDREN BY SIMPLY TACKING ON UNTOLD BILLIONS TO THE NATIONAL DEBT.

AND THE PRICE OF HEALTH CARE REFORM SHOULD NOT BE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE BEST HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEM IN THE WORLD.

WE ARE NOW IN THE FINAL STAGES OF THE HEALTH CARE DEBATE. IT WAS A DEBATE THAT BEGAN IN A BI-PARTISAN MANNER, AND DESPITE THE RECENT RATCHETING UP OF RHETORIC BY THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE DEMOCRAT NATIONAL COMMITTEE, THE SEEDS OF A BI-PARTISAN PLAN STILL EXIST IF THE ADMINISTRATION COMES OUR WAY.

MANY OF THESE SEEDS CAN BE FOUND IN THE "CALL TO ACTION" WHICH YOU RELEASED THIS PAST JANUARY -- MUCH OF WHICH IS CONTAINED IN THE PROPOSAL PUT FORWARD BY SENATOR PACKWOOD AND MYSELF.

INSURANCE REFORMS DEALING WITH ISSUES LIKE PORTABILITY AND PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS; STATE DESIGNED AND RUN PURCHASING COOPERATIVES; A CORE BENEFIT PACKAGE AND SUBSIDIES FOR LOW INCOME AMERICANS; MEDICAL MALPRACTICE AND LIABILITY REFORMS; RELIEF FROM ANTI-TRUST STATUTES; ADMINISTRATIVE SIMPLIFICATIONS: ALL OF THESE WERE CONTAINED IN YOUR "CALL TO ACTION", ALL HELP THE SO-CALLED "MIDDLE CLASS", AND ALL CAN BE FOUND IN THE DOLE-PACKWOOD PROPOSAL.

IN OUR BUSINESS WE NEVER SAY THAT SOMEONE IS AGAINST US. EITHER THEY'RE FOR US OR THEY'RE UNDECIDED. AND, I HAVE NOTED THAT THERE IS ONE KEY ISSUE IN THE DOLE-PACKWOOD PROPOSAL ON WHICH THE GOVERNORS ARE "UNDECIDED."

THAT, OF COURSE, IS THE CAP ON MEDICAID. OVER THE PAST FEW WEEKS, WE HAVE BEEN IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE NGA STAFF IN

WASHINGTON ON THIS MATTER, AND YOU CAN BE SURE THAT WE UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERNS ABOUT BEING LEFT HOLDING THE BAG, AND BELIEVE WE CAN WORK TOGETHER TO SETTLE OUR DIFFERENCES.

ONE IDEA WE ARE FLESHING OUT IS TO GIVE STATES THE OPTION OF BUYING IN ALL AFDC AND NON-CASH RECIPIENTS INTO THE PRIVATE SECTOR PROGRAM, SO THAT THE LARGE MAJORITY OF LOW INCOME INDIVIDUALS -- WHETHER THEY ARE THE WORKING POOR OR THE NON-WORKING POOR -- ARE TREATED THE SAME WAY.

AS YOU, YOURSELVES, HAVE SUGGESTED, TO THE GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE, THE LOW INCOME POPULATION SHOULD RECEIVE ITS HEALTH CARE THROUGH THE SAME DELIVERY MECHANISM AS THE REST OF THE POPULATION. ADDITIONALLY, THE PROPOSED MEDICAID CAP COULD WELL BE REPLACED WITH SOME VARIATION OF A MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT THAT MAKES SURE IT'S IN YOUR INTEREST AND IN OURS TO NEGOTIATE THE MOST REASONABLE RATES WITH THE INSURANCE PLANS FOR THESE LOW INCOME INDIVIDUALS.

AGAIN, OUR DOOR, AS ALWAYS, IS OPEN TO YOU. I AM ANXIOUS TO CONTINUE OUR DISCUSSIONS.

I NEED NOT REMIND YOU THAT THE ADMINISTRATION'S BILL IS ALSO FAR FROM PERFECT IN REGARDS TO MEDICAID. THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE FINANCE COMMITTEE PROPOSAL WOULD PHASE OUT THE MEDICAID DISPROPORTIONATE SHARE PAYMENTS -- SOMETHING WE ARE VERY MUCH OPPOSED TO.

SO, WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

WELL, THE FIRST THING TO DO IS TO GET BACK TO THE ISSUES THAT MATTER. NOTWITHSTANDING WHAT YOU READ IN THE MEDIA THIS ISSUE IS NOT ABOUT BILL CLINTON VERSUS BOB DOLE. OR THE DEMOCRATS VERSUS THE REPUBLICANS, OR THE POOR VERSUS THE MIDDLE CLASS. HEALTH CARE IS TOO IMPORTANT TO BE TURNED INTO CLASS WARFARE OR A POLITICAL BATTLE OF PERSONALITIES.

BUS TRIPS, TELEVISION COMMERCIALS, AND ORGANIZED ATTACKS ON PIZZA HUT OR OTHERS WHO DARE SPEAK OUT AGAINST THE ADMINISTRATION BILL DO NOT HELP THE PROCESS ONE BIT. WE NEED TO MOVE PAST THE RHETORIC AND TOWARD REALITY. IT'S TIME FOR A SECOND OPINION.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE HEARD THE DEBATE, THEY'VE COME TO TOWN MEETINGS IN RECORD NUMBERS, THEY'VE CALLED TALK SHOWS, AND WRITTEN LETTERS.

AND WHAT THEY'RE SAYING IS THIS: OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM ISN'T PERFECT, BUT IS THE BEST IN THE WORLD. YES, IT'S IN NEED OF REPAIR, BUT NOT IN NEED OF A COMPLETE AND TOTAL OVERHAUL -- AND MOST DEFINITELY NOT IN NEED OF A COMPLETE AND TOTAL TAKEOVER BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

AND, IF GIVEN THE CHOICE BETWEEN GETTING IT DONE RIGHT, AND GETTING IT DONE FAST, I KNOW WHAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WOULD

CHOOSE. SO, LET'S STOP SETTING ARTIFICIAL DEADLINES. THE TRUTH IS WE HAVE NO COST ESTIMATES YET AVAILABLE ON WHAT COULD BE THE SINGLE LARGEST ENTITLEMENT PROGRAM CREATED IN HISTORY. NOR ANY LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE CONTAINING ALL THE DETAILS THAT COULD MAKE OR BREAK THE PROPOSAL.

REMEMBER THAT NO ONE WILL GET EVERYTHING THEY WANT. BUT REAL HEALTH CARE REFORM IS STILL POSSIBLE.

LET ME QUOTE FROM A STORY IN THE WALL STREET JOURNAL ON JULY 8 THAT SHOULD BE REQUIRED READING IN THE WHITE HOUSE AND ON CAPITOL HILL. IT CONCERNED HEALTH CARE REFORM IN MINNESOTA. IT SAYS:

"LAST YEAR, MINNESOTA HELD ITSELF UP AS A STATE THAT COULD TEACH THE REST OF THE U.S. HOW TO OVERHAUL THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN A HURRY. THIS YEAR, REFORM-MINDED STATES SUCH AS MINNESOTA HAVE A NEW MESSAGE: DON'T TRY TO FIX EVERYTHING AT ONCE." AND THE STATE HEALTH COMMISSIONER SAID, "OUR BUZZWORD THIS YEAR IS SEQUENTIAL REFORM. DOING THINGS ONE STEP AT A TIME. I HOPE THAT AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL, PEOPLE WILL DO THE SAME."

WELFARE REFORM

WELFARE REFORM IS ANOTHER ISSUE WHERE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO LISTEN TO YOU MORE AND MANDATE LESS. WHILE WE BEGIN THE LONG PROCESS OF PUTTING TOGETHER LEGISLATION, THE MOST IMPORTANT THING WE CAN DO IS GET OUT OF YOUR WAY.

I KNOW THAT GOVERNOR ENGLER ASKED SENATOR MITCHELL ABOUT LANGUAGE IN THE AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS BILL THAT BARS STATES FROM RECEIVING NEW USDA APPROVED WAIVERS TO CONVERT FOOD STAMPS TO CASH BENEFITS OR WAGE SUBSIDIES.

AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, THERE IS A MCCAIN-KERRY AMENDMENT THAT WOULD STRIKE THIS LANGUAGE -- THAT MAY WELL BE DEBATED ON THE SENATE FLOOR TODAY. I BELIEVE THIS IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE WHERE STATE FLEXIBILITY AND INNOVATION SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED, AND I AM PROUD TO SUPPORT THIS AMENDMENT.

CRIME

LAST NOVEMBER, THE SENATE PASSED A BIPARTISAN CRIME BILL. YET TODAY, NEARLY 8 MONTHS LATER, WE HAVE NOTHING TO SHOW FOR OUR EFFORTS.

ONE OF THE STICKING POINTS IS THE SO-CALLED RACIAL JUSTICE ACT, WHICH IS PART OF A LONG TRADITION IN CONGRESS OF GIVING BAD LEGISLATION A GREAT-SOUNDING NAME.

ALTHOUGH MORE THAN 30 STATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL -- DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS -- HAVE URGED CONGRESS TO DROP THE ACT, FEARING THAT IT WOULD SOUND THE DEATH KNELL FOR THEIR STATE DEATH PENALTY LAWS, PRESIDENT CLINTON AND ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO HAVE, SO FAR,

REMAIN OFFICIALLY NEUTRAL. PRESIDENT CLINTON COULD HELP BREAK THE CONFERENCE LOG-JAM IF, LATER TODAY, HE PUBLICLY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY -- DENOUNCED THE RACIAL JUSTICE ACT FOR WHAT IT REALLY IS: A BACK-DOOR EFFORT TO GUT OUR NATION'S DEATH PENALTY LAWS.

IT ALSO APPEARS THE CRIME CONFEREES ARE TRYING TO RESURRECT LAST YEAR'S DEFEATED STIMULUS PACKAGE, DISGUIISING A HODGEPODGE OF BIG DOLLAR SPENDING PROGRAMS UNDER THE GUISE OF ANTICRIME LEGISLATION. BY MY COUNT, THERE ARE MORE THAN 15 SEPARATE SO-CALLED "PREVENTION" PROGRAMS TOTTALLING BILLIONS AND BILLIONS OF DOLLARS.

WHILE SOME PREVENTION MAY MAKE SENSE, IT IS THE PRISON CELL RATHER THAN THE PORK BARREL -- THAT IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE DETERRENT TO VIOLENT CRIME. AND THAT'S WHERE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CAN AND SHOULD MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE -- BY PROVIDING YOU, THE STATES, WITH THE RESOURCES TO ENSURE THAT VIOLENT CRIMINALS ARE KEPT BEHIND BARS WHERE THEY BELONG.

IF I HAD MY WAY, THE CRIME BILL WOULD DO JUST THAT -- PROVIDING AT LEAST \$13 BILLION DIRECTLY TO THE STATES FOR PRISON CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION.

AS YOU ALL KNOW, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CAN BE MORE OF A HINDRANCE THAN A HELP TO YOUR OWN EFFORTS IN THE WAR ON CRIME.

FOR EXAMPLE, GOVERNOR FIFE SYMINGTON TRIED TO GET PORNOGRAPHY OUT OF THE ARIZONA PRISON SYSTEM, ONLY TO BE OVERRULED BY A FEDERAL JUDGE. IN OTHER STATES, FEDERAL JUDGES HAVE DECIDED THAT PRISONERS LACKING ACCESS TO TELEVISIONS AND BASKETBALL COURTS SUFFER "CRUEL AND UNUSUAL PUNISHMENT." FEDERAL "PRISON CAP" ORDERS HAVE LED TO THE EARLY RELEASE OF VIOLENT, VICIOUS CRIMINALS.

AND AS GOVERNORS WILSON, WELD, AND BAYH POINTED OUT ON THE DAVID BRINKLEY SHOW SUNDAY, FEDERAL JUDGES HAVE TOO OFTEN ACTED AS LEGISLATORS, CREATING THE "EXCLUSIONARY RULE" AND ESTABLISHING AN ELABORATE SYSTEM OF CRIMINAL APPEALS, ALL IN THE NAME OF "HABEAS CORPUS." THE RESULT: MORE DELAYS. MORE EXPENSE. MORE FRUSTRATION. AND AN AMERICAN PUBLIC THAT QUESTIONS WHETHER OUR SYSTEM OF JUSTICE IS ON THE SIDE OF THE LAW-ABIDING... OR THE CRIMINAL.

SO, WHETHER IT'S CRIME, OR WELFARE REFORM, OR HEALTH CARE REFORM, IT'S CRITICAL FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO REMEMBER TO "DO NO HARM."

LET ME CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR CONFERENCE. YOUR MESSAGE IS BEING HEARD LOUD AND CLEAR IN CONGRESS. I LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING TO WORK WITH YOU ENSURING THAT FEDERALISM IS ALIVE AND WELL.

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