

*Bob Dole*



**NEWS**

**U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS**

**FROM:**

**SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER**

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## MITCHELL HEALTH CARE BILL

WASHINGTON - Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole made the following remarks today on Senator Mitchell's health care reform bill:

Senator Mitchell spoke eloquently today about the health care problems Americans face.

And throughout this debate, no one--Republican or Democrat--has argued that we shouldn't help make insurance more affordable and more available to more and more Americans.

But we do have differences in how we do it.

There are some positive features included in Senator Mitchell's bill--features that are also included in the Dole-Packwood proposal. But taken in its totality, the Mitchell bill is very similar to President Clinton's proposal in that it prescribes more government, more taxes, and more entitlements.

I only received the bill summary a short time ago, so I will have more to say after I have an opportunity to study it in greater detail--but some provisions concern me and should concern all Americans.

\*The Mitchell bill contains a triggered mandate. And that will ultimately result in the loss of jobs.

\*The Mitchell bill mandates a comprehensive standard benefits package that will raise costs for countless Americans.

\*The Mitchell bill imposes at least 17 new taxes, including a tax on every health insurance premium.

\*The Mitchell bill creates three new entitlement programs--at a cost of at least \$172 billion.

\*Under the Mitchell bill, more than 100 million people--almost one out of every two Americans--will be eligible for subsidies when the program is phased in. That's more than the current Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security programs combined.

\*Under the Mitchell bill, a presidentially-appointed national health board will have the authority to intervene between Americans and their provider, and make decisions about your care.

\*The bill contains what are, in reality, price controls on premiums that may result in punishing states that have been effective in reducing health care costs.

\*The bill terminates the self-insurance for at least 16 million Americans--causing real disruption in their coverage.

\*The Mitchell bill does not allow for Medical Savings Accounts--one of the true innovative ideas advanced in this entire debate.

As I said, those concerns arise after a very quick reading, and I'm sure more will arise in the coming weeks, as Republicans put this plan under the microscope, and share the facts with the American people--detailing what we like, and what we don't like.

The bottom line is that this is an issue that must ultimately be decided in America's living rooms--not in the back rooms of Congress. The American people have the right to know just how their life will be changed by the Mitchell plan, the Gephardt plan, the Dole-Packwood plan, or any plan that is ultimately passed.

As we prepare for debate next week, I'd also like to offer one word of advice to the President and some of his allies: cool down the rhetoric.

Yesterday, the President attacked all Americans who opposed his legislation as "naysayers" and "dividers." That type of talk is unfortunate, and doesn't advance the debate one bit.

The fact of the matter is that those who oppose the Clinton and Clinton-style plans are for many things.

We're for portability of insurance. We're for helping those with pre-existing conditions. We're for helping millions and millions of low-income Americans obtain insurance. We're for Medical Savings Accounts. We're for maintaining the quality and choice that Americans have come to expect.

We just don't happen to support more government, more taxes, and more mandates.

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