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NEWS

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REPUBLICAN CRIME BILL

DOLE INTRODUCES "CRIME CONTROL IMPROVEMENT ACT": EFFORT TO STRIP PORK, BEEF UP PENALTIES IN JUST-SIGNED BILL

Instead of signing the so-called crime bill, President Clinton should have used today's White House ceremony to send the bill back to Congress marked with four simple letters: V.E.T.O. Veto.

The President should have told Congress to cut out the billions and billions of dollars in wasteful social spending, toughen up the penalties, and send him a new-and-improved crime bill that matches his own tough-on-crime rhetoric.

Republican Tough-On-Crime Measures

And that's exactly what Senate Republicans tried to do last month, when we were ready to offer a series of ten amendments...all designed to improve the crime bill by stripping out the pork and toughening up the weakest parts of the watered-down conference report.

Republicans tried to save the taxpayers nearly \$5 billion by cutting such phony "crime-fighting" measures as the Local Partnership Act, the Model Intensive Grants Program, the National Community Economic Partnership...even something called the "Ounce of Prevention" Program, which in reality is not an ounce, but a multi-million dollar ton of pure, unadulterated pork-barrel spending.

Republicans sought to establish mandatory minimum penalties for those vicious criminals who use a gun in the commission of a crime and who sell illegal drugs to children.

Republicans tried to ensure the swift deportation of illegal aliens who have committed violent crimes while in the United States.

Republicans attempted to tighten up the crime bill's prison language so that funds will be used to build "brick and mortar" prison cells, rather than warm-and-fuzzy prison "alternatives" such as "half-way houses" and "juvenile detention centers." Believe it or not, there's no guarantee that one dime of the crime bill's \$30 billion will be used to build a single prison cell.

And, last month, Republicans sought to ensure that first-time violent offenders are kept behind bars by encouraging states to adopt real, meaningful truth-in-sentencing reform.

Although a full two weeks have elapsed since the Senate's passage of the conference report and today's signing ceremony, Republicans were nonetheless blocked--shut out--from using just several hours to debate our ten amendments, toughen up the crime bill in the process, and potentially save the taxpayers nearly \$5 billion.

So-Called Crime Bill: Expensive Lesson for Americans

So, today's signing ceremony may be a legislative victory for President Clinton, but it's a very expensive lesson for the American people.

The American people aren't dumb. They know that the crime bill is more hype than tough-on-crime substance. They know that it fully funds only 20,000 new police officers, not the 100,000 claimed by the administration.

And the American people understand that the most effective way to prevent crime is not with the pork-barrel, but with the prison cell.

Although Senate Republicans came up a bit short last month, this temporary set-back doesn't mean we've given up. On the contrary: Republicans will continue to push ahead--with greater effort and with even greater resolve--until the American people

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