

*Bob Dole*

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

NEWS  
FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER



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## HEALTH CARE REFORM

WASHINGTON -- Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole today issued the following statement:

"The Majority Leader announced today what many of us have known for some time -- that the health care clock has struck midnight for this year. It is my view that Senator Mitchell has made the right decision, not because we don't want to help more Americans get affordable health care -- we certainly do -- but because we need to be certain we do the job right. There have been a lot of proposals floating around in the past week or two, and some may have constructive ideas. But, rushing to pass some hurriedly cobbled together health care plan is a prescription for trouble, especially when you're talking about an issue involving one-seventh of the nation's economy.

"As I said last week, while some may be disappointed in the status of the health care debate, a lot went right in the past year. The American people studied the issue, they listened to the debate, and they said in overwhelming numbers, "slow down." The American people will speak again on November 8th, and they'll give us further guidance as to whether we should pursue health care reform that calls for more government control, or reform that preserves quality, choice, and jobs, and addresses issues of cost.

"It's too bad that some are already playing the election-year blame game. But, these last-minute attempts to fault Republicans won't sell with the American people. In fact, many Americans are pleased that Republicans raised so many questions that went to the heart of this debate -- choice, quality, and protection against an overdose of government control. The fact of the matter is, if anyone put the brakes on health care reform for this year, it was the overwhelming consensus of the American people. We saw democracy in action. The bottom line is, the Democrats never had the votes for any reform plan -- as far as I know, no Democrat plan reached the level of support of the Dole/Packwood plan.

"Certainly, the health care debate has come a long way, and it is far from complete. We have a much better understanding of what is possible, and what isn't. But we still have work to do in order to prescribe the right dose of reform. I can assure my colleagues that no matter which party controls Congress next year, health care will be near the top of the agenda. During the past year, Republicans have made constructive proposals to improve our health care system, and we will be ready next year to continue fighting for reform that guarantees the quality and choice the American people have come to expect, and ready to oppose ideas that threaten the well-being of the best health care delivery system in the world."

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