

News from Senator

# BOB DOLE



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## DOLE SUPPORTS TELEVISION COVERAGE OF SENATE PROCEEDINGS

WASHINGTON -- In his testimony before the Committee on Rules and Administration today, Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan.) supported Senate Resolution 20, which provides for radio and television coverage of Senate proceedings.

"In 1977 I was one of 38 co-sponsors of S. Res. 153, which provided for a one-year trial of radio and television coverage of the Senate. I felt then that the time had come to usher in this new era of public access to and participation in the operation of their government," said Dole. "Once again, I will state for the record that it is incumbent upon us to wait no longer."

"We have all said at one time or another during our congressional careers that this issue or that issue can be put off for yet a while longer. Unlike the public's call for tax relief, spending reductions, and regulatory reform, there really is no great public groundswell for access to our deliberations.

"In the opinion of this senator, it would be wrong to postpone consideration of the introduction of live coverage of debate any longer. There is really no issue as such," Dole said.

"Some people will say that the cameras should never be allowed. Some people will argue and raise objections that the time is not appropriate because the Senate must deal with the difficult business of the nation, such as jobs, the economy, abortion, taxes, national defense, and other more or less controversial matters. We must not be deterred by the superficially appealing argument that the Senate is too embroiled in controversy to consider such a mundane issue as televised sessions.

"We cannot escape television. It has brought us the beautiful and the unspeakable. We have seen moon landings and Watergate; saturn close-ups and elected officials expelled from public office; inaugurations and attempted assassinations.

"It is the view of this senator that an opportunity to see how deliberation progresses might be a salutary antidote to the commercial, packaged reports of our activities to which the average citizen is not only exposed but which is in truth his principal source of information concerning how his government operates.

"I submit that this body has, and always will remain in the days of electronic communication, its own best advertisement. Televised sessions will provide a new perspective from which the public can judge us. I have the greatest confidence, for instance, that the courtesy in debate for which the Senate is world famous might be heeded as an example to our nation when discourse repeatedly tends to take on the edge of confrontation.

"Television has been, and if monitored and used properly will remain, the greatest educational and informational tool available to a majority of our citizens."