

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE WELCOMES JAPANESE IMPORT MOVEMENT; HINTS RUMORED FIGURE INADEQUATE

WASHINGTON -- Senate Finance Committee Chairman Bob Dole (R-Kan.) today welcomed reports from Tokyo that there has apparently been movement by Japanese automakers towards accepting auto import restrictions to the United States, but stated that the rumored figure of 1.8 million autos for a period of only one year may not be acceptable to the United States.

"I welcome today's reports that Japan's auto companies have accepted government limitations on the export of autos to the United States," Dole said. "However, I do not believe that the Finance Committee will find the reported Japanese plan to restrict imports for one year to 1.8 million cars to be an acceptable solution, for two reasons.

"First, the rumored level of 1.8 million imports (which because of differing bookkeeping methods corresponds to 1.7 million Japanese exports) represents only a very slight retreat from the record-high level of Japanese auto imports into this country in 1980. Second, a one-year restraint is obviously too short to give the U.S. industry a chance to complete a multi-billion-dollar retooling process in which it is engaged.

"The Senate is currently considering legislation to impose a quota of 1.6 million cars annually for three years on imports from Japan. The purpose of that legislation would be to provide a temporary 'breathing spell' during which the U.S. industry can retool to produce new, more fuel-efficient models. It is my hope that the eventual Japanese limitation -- the details of which have not yet been officially revealed -- will be sufficient to make it unnecessary for the Senate to consider legislated import quotas."