

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

SH 141 Hart Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 1983

CONTACT: WALT RIKER
(202) 224-6521

DOLE: WE WON!

BUTLER COUNTY TO REMAIN IN GREATER WICHITA STATISTICAL AREA

WASHINGTON -- Kansas Senator Bob Dole today revealed that Butler County will remain in the two-county Wichita federal statistical area.

"The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has informed me that it has granted an exception to new federal standards that would have excluded Butler County from the Wichita Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)," said Dole, the driving force behind the favorable decision.

"We won! This is great news for Kansans -- it would have been absolutely wrong to exclude Butler County from the Wichita MSA, when it is clearly a fast growing and vital part of the metropolitan area," Dole said. "This will certainly enhance the opportunities for economic development in the two-county area."

Senator Dole first took action in March of 1981, when he wrote to Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige to explain the critical needs of greater Wichita.

"When I first learned about the 'SMSA' problem more than two years ago, I understood what a long-shot it would be to win special consideration. That was why I took this case directly to Office of Management and Budget Director David Stockman -- by letter, by phone, and in face-to-face discussions. I am pleased with Mr. Stockman's understanding of our special case, and the Administration's cooperation in granting this exception."

Dole noted that this exception is one of a very few granted in 250 appeals made by communities across the nation. The Kansas Republican said that Butler County's close relationship with the Wichita metropolitan area was carefully documented and persuasively presented to OMB by officials from both counties and was a prime factor in protecting the two-county MSA. As a result, federal statistics will accurately portray the Wichita area by reporting a population of 411,313 rather than only the 366,531 inhabitants of Sedgwick County.

"The accuracy of metropolitan determinations is especially critical because federal government programs have the option of using MSA designations for funding decisions. For example, Medicare funds to Butler County would have decreased if it had been excluded from a designated urban area," Dole said.

"Accurate portrayal of the area should necessarily include the Butler County labor force because 38.8 percent of Butler County workers commute to jobs in Sedgwick County. Other economic ties between Butler County and the greater Wichita area include retail markets, banking and other services, recreational and cultural opportunities, and media service. In addition, several local jurisdictions overlap the two counties, such as school districts and water service."

....MORE

OMB has recently completed applying new criteria for federal metropolitan areas to 1980 census data. Butler County did not meet the new population density requirement for inclusion in the Wichita MSA, but it was a borderline case. The density increased from 26.8 persons per square mile to 31.1 in 1980, concentrated particularly in the eastern part of the county adjacent to Sedgwick County.

DOLE ACTION

March, 1981	Dole writes to Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige.
April, 1981	Dole arranges to meet with Wichita officials and Commerce Department officials.
October 12, 1982	Dole writes Federal Committee on SMSAs.
November 10, 1982	Dole receives response from Federal Committee acknowledging concerns.
November, 1982	Dole receives letters of support from Butler County Commissioners.
December 15, 1982	Dole, with Senator Nancy Kassebaum and Representative Bob Whittaker, writes to Office of Management and Budget.
December 22, 1982	Dole writes OMB Director David Stockman.
December 31, 1982	Dole makes phone call to David Stockman.
January 17, 1983	Dole receives letter from Stockman.
March, 1983	Dole meets with Stockman.
April, 1983	Dole meets with Stockman.
May 2, 1983	Dole arranges, attends meeting with Wichita Chamber of Commerce, OMB officials.
May and June, 1983	Dole, through staff, regularly contacts OMB until assurances are given.
June 20, 1983	Case closed -- Butler County to remain in Wichita statistical area.