

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE MOVES TO SET UP PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON AIDS

WASHINGTON -- SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE (R-KANS.) TODAY INTRODUCED A RESOLUTION ASKING THAT A PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION BE ESTABLISHED TO HELP DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF AIDS, AND TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO ADDRESS THE DISEASE ON A GLOBAL BASIS. THE CREATION OF SUCH A COMMISSION HAS BEEN RECOMMENDED BY THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES.

"Because of the breadth of issues that must be addressed with AIDS, it is clear that there will need to be full cooperation of all involved parties," Dole said in introducing the measure. "This is especially true for the private sector, whose involvement is critical. Dealing with AIDS is not just a matter of federal funding of health sciences or health sciences research. There are questions about education, labor relations, employee benefits and confidentiality which should be resolved. There are moral and ethical questions that need to be addressed. And for this to occur, it is our sense that the Commission must be organized at the highest level, where all can play a role and have an impact."

Dole noted that the need for additional legislation is clear. "It is not our intention to simply pass off responsibility to the Commission for the foreseeable future -- we can make some progress now with respect to resource allocation and the development of educational tools. But, he added, "We simply don't have the answer to everything. That is why the role of a Presidential Commission is so critical, and why its members must be able to fairly and adequately address all sides of the questions before us."

The proposed Commission would include representatives from the insurance industry; the business community; the pharmaceutical industry; labor; health care providers; the International Red Cross; the National Association of Governors; foundations; religion; and scientific experts.