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STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOB DOLE ON THE BORK NOMINATION

I HEARTILY SUPPORT THE NOMINATION OF ROBERT H. BORK TO THE SUPREME COURT.

IT IS APPARENT, ALREADY, THAT JUDGE BORK'S NOMINATION WILL COME UNDER INTENSE SCRUTINY -- AS WELL IT SHOULD. FOR A SUPREME COURT JUSTICE FILLS A CRITICAL, PIVOTAL ROLE IN THE BALANCE OF POWER BETWEEN THE THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT. AND THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVE ON THE COURT MUST MEET THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF JUDICIAL COMPETENCE AND INTEGRITY. I DON'T KNOW OF ANYONE WHO DOUBTS JUDGE BORK'S QUALIFICATIONS.

THERE ARE SOME WHO WILL TRY TO TURN THE CONFIRMATION OF ROBERT BORK INTO A POLITICAL DEBATE -- AN IDEALOGICAL DEBATE. BUT THAT IS NOT WHAT THE SENATE'S ROLE IS. WE HAVE A CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO ADVISE AND CONSENT, BUT THAT SHOULD BE BASED ON JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS, NOT ON WHETHER OR NOT A PROSPECTIVE JUSTICE TILTS THE COURT ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, PHILOSOPHICALLY.

BORK, IS A FORMER YALE LAW SCHOOL PROFESSOR, AND IS WIDELY ACKNOWLEDGED AS ONE OF THIS NATION'S FOREMOST LEGAL SCHOLARS. PLUS, HAVING SERVED FOUR YEARS AS SOLICITOR GENERAL AND FIVE YEARS ON THE FEDERAL COURT OF APPEALS, HE HAS HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE IN THE DAY-TO-DAY WORKINGS OF THE COURT.

I HOPE WE WILL ALL THINK CAREFULLY BEFORE WE MAKE A DECISION ABOUT THIS NOMINATION -- IT IS A VERY, VERY SIGNIFICANT ONE. AND WE SHOULD MAKE OUR JUDGEMENTS ON THE RIGHT GROUNDS -- THE LITMUS TEST SHOULD BE THE CORRECT ONE -- WHETHER THIS NOMINEE IS QUALIFIED AS A JURIST.