

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DESERT STORM PHONE RATES

DOLE SEEKS REDUCTION IN SAUDI'S SKY HIGH PHONE RATES
FOR DESERT STORM FAMILIES;
KINGDOM'S "WRONG NUMBER" COSTING SOLDIERS & LOVED ONES

WASHINGTON -- CONCERNED THAT "SAUDI ARABIA IS STILL BILLING AMERICAN SOLDIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES WITH ASTRONOMICAL TELEPHONE SURCHARGES," SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE (R-KANSAS) IS CALLING ON THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO SEEK AN IMMEDIATE DISCOUNT IN TELEPHONE FEES PAID TO THE SAUDI GOVERNMENT, AND AN ELIMINATION OF FEES FOR PHONE CALLS THAT BYPASS SAUDI PHONE EQUIPMENT.

IN A SENATE RESOLUTION INTRODUCED THURSDAY NIGHT, DOLE ALSO URGED THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION TO ENSURE THAT LOCAL PHONE COMPANIES ADOPT FLEXIBLE BILLING PROCEDURES FOR FAMILIES FACING MONUMENTAL PHONE BILLS BECAUSE OF CALLS TO OR FROM LOVED ONES SERVING IN OPERATION DESERT STORM. DOLE'S RESOLUTION FURTHER DEMANDS THAT THE FCC WORK WITH STATE AUTHORITIES TO ENSURE THAT SERVICE FAMILIES' PHONE SERVICE IS NOT CUT OFF BECAUSE OF INABILITY TO IMMEDIATELY PAY MASSIVE DESERT STORM PHONE BILLS.

"WITH THEIR SKY HIGH TELEPHONE SURCHARGES, THE SAUDIS ARE DIALING A WRONG NUMBER AND SOCKING THE FAMILIES OF THE AMERICAN SOLDIERS THAT ARE BRAVELY DEFENDING THEIR ROYAL KINGDOM," DOLE SAID. "NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, OUR FIGHTING FORCES AND THEIR FAMILIES DESERVE BETTER. IF ANYONE SHOULD GET A FAIR SHAKE, IT'S THOSE WHO ARE DOING THE HARD WORK OF FREEDOM, NOT ONLY FOR AMERICANS, BUT FOR SAUDIS AS WELL."

CURRENTLY, THE SAUDI GOVERNMENT IMPOSES A SURCHARGE ON AMERICAN PHONE COMPANIES OF 73 CENTS PER MINUTE -- MORE THAN HALF THE COST OF THE CALL -- ON DIRECT SATELLITE CALLS THAT DO NOT EVEN USE SAUDI EQUIPMENT, AND \$1.05 PER MINUTE ON CALLS TO OR FROM SAUDI ARABIA THAT USE SAUDI CIRCUITS. DOLE'S RESOLUTION SEEKS TO GREATLY REDUCE PHONE CHARGES TO AMERICAN SOLDIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES BY PURSUING ELIMINATION OF THE 73 CENT SURCHARGE, AND REDUCTION OF THE SURCHARGE FOR CALLS USING SAUDI CIRCUITS.

"THE FCC HAS JUST EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN ABOUT HIGH DESERT STORM PHONE RATES AND IS SEEKING TO WORK WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO PREVENT SERVICE CUTOFFS," DOLE ADDED. "BUT TALKING WON'T DO IT -- FAST ACTION IS REQUIRED. AT THIS RATE, COALITION FORCES MAY LIBERATE KUWAIT BEFORE OUR SERVICE FAMILIES ARE FREE FROM CRUSHING PHONE RATES."

TO FURTHER REDUCE THE BURDEN ON SOLDIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES, THE DOLE RESOLUTION ALSO URGES AMERICAN LONG-DISTANCE COMPANIES TO FILE NEW, LOWER EMERGENCY RATES WITH THE FCC TO REMAIN IN EFFECT FOR THE DURATION OF THE WAR.

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BOB DOLE



(U.S. Senator) (R-Kansas) (D.C. 20510-1001)

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PHONE RATES

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