

Bob Dole

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER



NEWS
FROM:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, January 9, 1995

CONTACT: KIM MCCREERY
(202) 224-8953

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB DOLE
REMARKS TO THE AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI - Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole (R-Kansas) today issued the following statement at the 76th Anniversary of the American Farm Bureau Federation:

Much has changed since your first meeting in 1920, but two things haven't. The first is that Strom Thurmond is still in the Senate. The second is that the Farm Bureau has always fought the good fight for America's farming and agriculture community.

I have been proud to work with you throughout my years in Congress. And I am looking forward to the months ahead and to something that hasn't been done in 40 years. And that's writing a Farm Bill with Republicans in control of both houses of Congress.

And no doubt about it, Dick Lugar and Pat Roberts will make outstanding Chairmen. They are fair. They are experienced. And they both care about America's farmers. I also want to repeat what I've said before. Even though Dan Glickman is from different a party, I think he will make an outstanding Secretary of Agriculture. I told Dan early on in the process that I would be happy to endorse him or not endorse him--whatever he thought would do the most good.

There are people more important than those filling the jobs in Washington, however--and that's the American people who send such a clear message this past November. In every region of the country, the voters endorsed the Republican agenda for change. That agenda includes less government, less spending, and fewer rules and regulations. And before I discuss farm bill specifics, I do want to talk for a few minutes about the "big picture."

Power to the States

I have something I'm going to carry with me throughout this session. It's a little card that contains the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution. And it says: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states, respectively, or to the people."

Federalism. The idea that power should be kept close to the people. It's the idea on which our nation was founded. But there are some in Washington who have believed for too long that neither our states nor our people can be trusted with power. Federalism has given way to paternalism--with disastrous results.

If I have one goal for the 104th Congress, it is this: That we will dust off the 10th Amendment and restore it to its rightful place in the Constitution.

The first step to accomplish this is Senate Bill #1, which puts an end to unfunded federal mandates on states, cities and communities across America. This legislation will ensure that no new federal environmental mandates will be placed on state and local governments without providing the necessary funds to implement the changes. We introduced the bill on the first day of session, held hearings on it the second day, and hope to pass it by the end of the month.

Regulatory Relief

If there's anyone who knows about the dangers and costs of too much government, too many bureaucrats, and too much interference from Washington, D.C., it's America's farmers.

Over the last several years, farmers have faced a growing onslaught of environmental regulations that originated in the federal bureaucracy -- with virtually no regard to the impact on the value of private property or on farmers' production costs.

This week, Republican Senators and House Members, led by Don Nickles, Kay Bailey Hutchison, and Kit Bond, will introduce legislation which would impose a six-month moratorium on new federal

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rules. And we've decided that if President Clinton can raise taxes retroactively, we can prohibit rules retroactively--and we hope to apply the moratorium to all rules issues since November 9th, the day after the election.

It is also time to send a clear message to the Washington-based environmental regulators that their policies and decisions are threatening the efficiency and competitiveness of the agriculture and food industries. It is time to bring sanity back to environmental regulation--and that includes the food safety arena, where we have exhibited a tendency to make decisions based on emotional appeals from special interest groups, rather than based on sound scientific research.

Along with putting an end to unfunded federal mandates, we will work to enact legislation to protect the value of private property and stop regulatory takings by the federal government.

We will also push for a cost/benefit analysis for each new major environmental regulation. Whether it is a wetlands determination, or the establishment of a habitat protection plan under the Endangered Species Act, farmers and ranchers have a right to know the estimated costs and benefits of regulations before they become laws.

Republicans Will Lead

America's farm families have struggled for survival against a two prong assault--one assault came, as I just mentioned, from the maze of government environmental agencies; and the second assault coming from the Internal Revenue Service.

We hope to lighten your burden by working to provide full deductibility of health insurance premiums for the self-employed, including farmers. We will push for reduction in the capital gains tax rate, particularly as it relates to the farming community. We will examine ways to modify existing estate tax laws, so we can help ensure that there will be a next generation of farmers.

If tax cuts are to have the effect of limiting government and providing for long-term prosperity, then they also must be matched by real cuts in government spending. And in a poll last week, when the American people were asked what should be the top priority of Congress, the top answer was to cut the federal budget deficit--with 55% of Americans saying that this is "absolutely critical."

They are absolutely right. Cutting the deficit is critical to America's future -- to the future of our children and grandchildren.

And let me repeat what I said on the Senate floor last week-- With the one exception of social security, every bureaucracy and bureaucrat, every government program and federal expense is ripe for reduction and elimination.

And no doubt about it, farm programs will also be facing careful scrutiny. And some cuts will be made. Senator Lugar, Congressman Roberts and I will work together, however, to ensure that agriculture is not targeted for more than its fair share of cuts.

Bright Future for Agriculture

I have long said that American farmers are the most competitive in the world given a level playing field. The passage of NAFTA and GATT helped to create just such a playing field. To take full advantage of increased trade opportunities, we must require more "bang for the buck" from our export expansion programs. Therefore, it is vitally important for the new farm bill to target our export programs to those markets with the greatest growth potential, including Asia/Pacific Rim and Latin America. And with an increased emphasis on value-added exports, we can enhance rural economic activity and stimulate rural employment.

Additionally, we need to learn from the past and reduce our reliance on acreage reduction programs. Idling acreage only increases foreign production and displaces U.S. export market share.

I also believe that agriculture the 1995 farm bill needs to expand the money spent on agricultural research. With the current budget laws and caps placed on discretionary spending, future funding for agricultural research will likely decline quite rapidly. And, if we find we have to reduce farm program spending to accomplish this -- it is a trade worth making.

I am very optimistic about this session of Congress. I believe that Republicans will succeed in giving government back to the people. And I believe that we will also succeed in giving America's farmers more freedom and more opportunity.

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