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# Dole may not run in '92 if GOP seems headed for a disaster

By Barry Massey  
Associated Press  
WASHINGTON — Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., said Friday that the potential for Republican losses in the Senate in the 1992 elections will play a role in whether he seeks another term next year.

Dole said he has no timetable for announcing whether he will run for re-election but hinted he might not if he thought Republicans would suffer substantial losses in 1992.

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next year, 30-some Republicans, this would be a pretty lonely place to hang around," Dole said.

Democrats now hold a 57-43 majority in the Senate. There are 20 Democratic seats and 14 GOP Senate seats at stake in the 1992 elections.

"I'm not prophetic, I may not be able to pick them all. But I want to make certain that if it's going to be a minority, we're going to be a viable minority and have some influence on policy," Dole said.

"I like to get involved in policy, whether it's the civil rights bill, or

whether it's unemployment benefits or whether it's the Thomas nomination."

In the Senate, it's important to control at least 41 votes in order to continue a filibuster, which is a common tactic of trying to prolong debate in order to kill or change legislation. To stop a filibuster takes a three-fifths majority, or 60 votes.

If the number of Republican senators would drop into the 30s, Dole said, the GOP minority would become "a sideshow."

Dole also said that if he did run and win re-election in 1992, it would almost

certainly be his last six-year term in the Senate. Dole, 68, first won election to the Senate in 1968.

"I don't know what I'm going to do, but it won't be more than another term whatever happens," Dole said.

To get an early indication of the GOP outlook, Dole said, he is closely watching next week's Senate election in Pennsylvania. Republican Dick Thornburgh is running against Democratic Sen. Harris Wofford.

Wofford was appointed to the Senate to replace the late Sen. John Heinz, a Republican who was killed in an air-

plane accident. Thornburgh is a former two-term governor of Pennsylvania and resigned as U.S. attorney general to run for the Senate seat.

Democrats have not won a Senate election in Pennsylvania since 1962. But a recent opinion poll by a Pennsylvania newspaper found Wofford virtually even with Thornburgh, after trailing the Republican by 44 percentage points in a summer poll.

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Dole

## GOP Health Care Bill

One year ago, Senate Republicans formed a health care task force ably chaired by the distinguished senator from Rhode Island, Senator Chafee.

No doubt about it, healthcare is at the top of the list when it comes to national priorities. Several months ago, I predicted that health care would be the number one issue in the 1992 presidential campaign, and judging by the intensifying focus on health care, it looks like my prediction is coming true.

Every American knows firsthand that health care costs have run amok. The number of uninsured has grown. And the middle class is getting more and more concerned about the security and affordability of health care. When I read recent polls indicating that 90 percent of the American people feel our health care system needs fundamental change, I believe it.

It always has been a priority issue with those of us from rural states where access to quality care is becoming more and more challenging, and in some places almost impossible. Let's face it, healthcare is not an issue that suddenly popped up this week. I have been immersed in this issue throughout the course of my career in public service, as have many others in this chamber.

### The No. 1 Priority in Kansas

I have just completed a year-long tour of all 105 counties in Kansas. After hundreds of town meetings and visits with Kansas officials, I can tell the Senate today that health care is the priority concern in my home state. That unanimous message does not come as any surprise, but it does underscore the fact that despite the best efforts of Republicans and Democrats during the past decades, the problem remains.

Reform proposals to revamp the current system are in no short supply — there's plenty of access to them. My latest count is 24. There's also been a flood of reform proposals that have poured out of business, labor, medical, insurance, and grassroots organizations.

But conventional wisdom among government and industry experts says that meaningful, comprehensive reform is at least three to five years away.

### What's blocking action?

There's a lot of finger-pointing going on right now. Democrats point to the White House. Others point to a Democrat-controlled Congress. Doctors point to the lawyers. Insurance companies point to wasteful hospitals and doctors who charge too much. Small business points to the insurance companies. Interest groups point to the lack of consensus. Everyone talks about how complex the issue is. And meanwhile, the American people watch in frustration as their coverage dwindles, or even disappears in some cases, and costs go higher and higher.

### A Bill That Can Become Law

It's time to stop pointing fingers — there's plenty of blame to go around — and it's time to really do something. I don't mean it's time to just talk about doing something. I mean it's time to introduce a bill that will actually pass — that will have the support of the president and Congress — from members on both sides — and that will become law.

My Republican colleagues and I have introduced a bill that I think has a fighting chance of doing just that.

For the past year, our Republican task force met every week searching for ways to curb the ever-rising health care costs, and to expand access for the millions of Americans now without insurance.

Our discussions have been frank and comprehensive. Did we agree on every point? Of course not. Have we solved the crisis? Not completely. But what we have done is put together a meaningful package that will improve health care for Americans.

We must remember, comprehensive, sweeping reform is going to take some time. Anyone who says it will happen overnight is going to be very disappointed.

Incentives vs. Crippling Mandates and Employer Taxes  
The financial resources to restructure the system are just not there. Simply put, the government is broke. And most of the states are running in the red as well. That's why the Democrats keep talking about taxing business — because that's what those pay or play proposals really are — a tax on business.

If it's America's intention to bankrupt the employers of our nation, particularly small employers, some of which are already operating on the margin — then the Democrats' bill is the right solution. Or if it's our intention to ravage the economy and force people out of work — then the proposals we've seen come forward by the Democrats are the right solution.

But, I doubt that is what most Americans want to see.

Our goal is to curb runaway health care costs that are consuming more and more of our gross national product.

Our goal is a health care system accessible to all Americans.

And our goal is to have health care reform that preserves the assets of our system — assets we often don't hear about — such as unparalleled high quality health care delivered by our health professionals.

The most critical element of the proposal before you is the use of incentives versus mandates.

We continue to believe that, given the chance, small business, the self-employed, and many individuals, will seek to protect themselves or their employees. Our bill will do that through the use of tax credits and reforms in small market insurance.

Additionally, our bill recognizes the multifaceted nature of the problems confronting us. Some people can be helped through the use of tax credits. Others will benefit through the expansion of the community health clinic program, while still others will avail themselves of coverage under the state publicly-financed program.

Rural Health Care and Cost Containment

I should also note that there is special attention given to the real needs of rural populations. Our bill not only increases the funding for community health clinics, it also increases funding for the National Health Service Corps, which will translate into more health care providers for rural areas.

Our bill also features some innovative provisions to contain skyrocketing costs. We believe that \$15 billion could be saved each year by reform of the medical liability laws. We've also made provisions for small

# GOP outlook to influence Dole re-election decision

Staff and wire reports  
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# Dole still undecided about '92 race

By HARRIS NEWS SERVICE  
Even after traveling through 105 Kansas counties, Sen. Bob Dole hasn't made up his mind about the 1992 Senate race.

Dole, Kansas' senior senator and the Senate's Republican minority leader, said earlier this fall he would make a decision shortly after touring the state. That tour concluded two weeks ago.

Friday, the Russell native said official business had kept him too busy to make a decision.

"I haven't made any plans," Dole said during his regular weekly telephone press conference. "I'm not stalling. I just haven't made any plans. We've been pretty busy here.

I'll probably have to do that one of these days. I'm running out of excuses."

Dole said he is weighing several factors, including the possible makeup of the Senate after the election. He said he would be reluctant to serve if so few Republicans were in the Senate that they would only serve as a token opposition party.

"I'm going to look at the Pennsylvania race very closely. I can tell you that," he said. "I want to see if we are going to pick up seats. If we are going to be down in the 30s next year — 30-some of Republicans — this would be a pretty lonely place to hang around. I'm going to take a

look at all these potential races, not that I'm prophetic. I might not be able to pick them all."

Dole said that if he ran for Senate in 1992 and won, he thought it would be his last term in Congress.

Dole said the Pennsylvania race between Sen. Harris Wofford, D-Pa., and former U.S. attorney general Dick Thornburgh is important.

Early on, Thornburgh had a 44-point lead in the polls over Wofford. Now, political analysts say Tuesday's election is too close to call.

Rep. Dan Glickman, D-Kan., has been considering a race for Dole's seat in 1992. Glickman said he, too, was undecided but probably would make his intentions known before

the end of the year.

"If Wofford, who was an unknown, beats Thornburgh, that does two things," Glickman said. "One, it makes it virtually impossible for the Republicans to take the Senate next time. But also sends a profound message to the president that people do not like the direction the country is moving in economic terms. You know America is slipping in the world."

Glickman said he would make his decision on whether to run for Senate or for re-election in the House independent of Dole's decision. But he acknowledged that a decision by Dole to run would change the complexion of any race.

# Dole secures enough funds to do U.S. 81

By WAYNE LAUGESEN  
Journal Staff Writer

Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole on Wednesday secured \$56.2 million to make U.S. 81 a four-lane expressway between Concordia and the Nebraska border.

"This will help Salina a lot," the Kansas Republican said, speaking from just outside the Senate chambers. "It will create a lot of jobs in the area, there will be twice as many people coming through, and there will be a lot more commerce."

Dole made a last-minute amendment to the nation's six-year highway bill to get \$73.6 million in reimbursements for the state's construction of portions of interstate highways. Of that, \$49.2 million go to U.S. 81 along with \$7 million he had secured Tuesday. The remaining \$24.4 million will double the federal contribution to a bypass in Hutchinson to connect U.S. 50 and K-96.

The announcement was cause for rejoicing by north-central Kansans who have worked for years to find funding to widen U.S. 81 from a mile south of Minneapolis to Nebraska.

"My gosh, just the construction on this alone will have a tremendous effect on the local economy," said Gerald Cook, president of the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce. "You're talking about a lot of jobs, and I mean a lot. This will be work for engineers, surveyors and general

## The highway funding

The Kansas funding included in the transportation funding measure is

■ \$56.2 million for U.S. 81, including \$7 million approved Tuesday and \$49.2 million added Wednesday.

■ \$48.8 million for a bypass in Hutchinson connecting U.S. 50 and K-96, including \$24.4 million approved earlier and \$24.4 million added Wednesday.

laborers, you name it."

The state's \$2.65 billion road improvement plan contains \$91.22 million to make U.S. 81 four lanes between Minneapolis and Concordia. Those involved in the project believe the federal funding will be enough to take the project to the state line.

State Sen. Ben Vidricksen, R-Salina, was instrumental in securing state funding for U.S. 81, and he said construction might begin next summer. Surveyors are working along the highway, and the project is in the design phase.

Cook said having funding for the whole project will put Salina in an "enviable position" for the recruitment of U.S. 81, Page 13

ing of business and industry.

Dole was in frequent contact Wednesday with Merle Miller, publisher of the Belleville Telescope and former president of the Pan American Highway Association. The association was formed by Miller's father in 1911 to work toward the construction of a four-lane highway to run north and south through all of North America and South America.

"I hope Merle Miller and I live long enough to see it," Dole said.

U.S. 81 from Minneapolis to Wattertown, S.D., is the only stretch of the Pan American Highway that remains two lanes.

"This makes quite a Thanksgiving for me," Miller said. "Bob Dole gets a lot of criticism for directing federal dollars to Kansas, but that's part of his job."

But the money would have eventually come to Kansas even if Dole had not amended the highway bill.

Dole said the \$73.6 million is money the federal government owes Kansas for its contributions to the construction of interstate highways.

Each state gets some reimbursement in the bill, and the amount is determined through many variables, he said.

"If I hadn't designated the money for these projects, it would have gone back to the state later in a big general pool of money," Dole said.

"I used to drive U.S. 81 all the time, and it's been in need of improvements for a long time. Every time I go to north-central Kansas, people say, 'Why can't you do something?'"

On Tuesday, before Dole knew how much reimbursement Kansas was to receive, Dole announced that the highway bill would contain \$7 million for the widening of U.S. 81 and \$24.4 million for the Hutchinson bypass.

"I was just sitting down to write the senator a thank-you letter when he called and said he had found more money," Miller said. "Of course, we were pleased about the \$7 million, but the senator and I both knew it wasn't enough."

Vidricksen said widening all of U.S. 81 will make the highway safer and will induce more traffic from Interstate 80 in Nebraska to use the highway. He said drivers avoid using the highway to go south from Interstate 80 because it is dangerous and frequently congested with heavy truck traffic.

A highway plan in Nebraska also includes money for widening U.S. 81.

# Highway bill earmarks \$1.3 billion for Kansas

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Kansas would receive an estimated \$1.3 billion in federal money for road and bridge projects in the state under a six-year highway bill compromise nearing final approval Tuesday in Congress.

Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., said the legislation would provide an average of \$216 million a year to Kansas for highway work.

During the past five years, Kansas received about \$735 million in highway aid for an average of \$147 million a year.

The measure, which was worked out by House and Senate negotiators, will provide Kansas with an estimated \$73 million over six years for special projects.

The current federal highway program expired at the end of September, which stopped the flow of federal road money to the states.

According to Dole, here is a list of individual highway projects in Kansas earmarked for federal spending by the House bill:

■ \$24.4 million for a new highway

bypass in Hutchinson. It will provide a new connection between US-50 and Kansas 96. The full cost of the project is estimated at \$48.8 million.

■ \$8.6 million for the West Leavenworth Trafficway in Leavenworth. The project calls for 3.1 miles of four-lane road on the western side of the city. A House-passed version of the bill provided \$600,000.

■ \$7 million for widening US-81 to four lanes from north of Concordia heading to Belleville.

Dole said five other projects in Kansas would receive money in the compromise bill, but his office was unable to provide the amounts. All of these projects were included in the highway bill passed in October by the House. Among them are:

■ An east-west bypass in the Lawrence area. The 25-mile project calls for new road construction and improvements of existing roads. The House bill provided \$3.9 million.

■ The Oakland Expressway in East Topeka. The project is a 5.5 mile north-south bypass connecting US-24 and I-470. The House bill provided \$7 million.