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FOR RELEASE:

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Congressman Bob Dole (R-Kansas) introduced a bill today which would require the Secretary of Agriculture to proclaim the 1964 national acreage allotment, ^{prior to March 15, 1963} and set the date for the "Wheat Referendum" on the 1964 wheat program not later than May 15, 1963.

Cong. Dole pointed out that under existing law the Referendum could be held as late as June 15, 1963 or earlier, depending upon the Secretary. Dole also noted the 1961 Wheat Referendum was not held until August 24 and in 1962² not until August 30. Under existing law the Referendum could be held earlier (within 60 days after proclaiming the national acreage allotment which could be done any time but which must be done prior to April 15.).

"There can be no reasonable excuse this year for not holding the Referendum prior to May 15 for the 1964 wheat program was enacted and signed by the President on September 27, 1962, some 5 months ago," Dole said.

Dole added, "Farmers complain, with justification, particularly in winter wheat areas, that the wheat referendum comes too late to permit them to do any prior planning. This year an early referendum would also give Congress adequate time to pass other wheat legislation should the referendum fail, and if it passes farmers will have time to make necessary decisions."

"Many farmers have indicated a late referendum will have a strong bearing on the final outcome of the Referendum in winter wheat areas. I do not believe any wheat producer eligible to vote, regardless of his views, should be subjected to this unnecessary indirect pressure. The farmer should be permitted to cast his vote, "yes" or "no", freely without being confronted with unnecessary obstacles."

Dole concluded he has written House Agriculture Committee Chairman Harold Cooley, asking for immediate hearings and Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman suggesting the Secretary act promptly. "If the Secretary responds accordingly, and I hope he does," Dole said, "no legislation would be necessary."

"By May 15, or before, the American wheat producer will have had time to determine his position and, in my opinion, to delay the referendum beyond that date will do a disservice to the wheat producer. An early referendum would also save the taxpayer a large chunk of the money now being expended by Freeman in efforts 'to sell', not explain, the program," Dole stated.

Complete text of the Bill referred to follows:

To require the national referendum on wheat to be held prior to May 15, 1963.

Be it enacted that Section 332(a) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938, as amended, is amended by adding at the end thereof the following:

"Provided, That for the 1964 crop of wheat, the Secretary shall issue such proclamation prior to March 15, 1963." SEC. 2 Section 336 of the Agricultural Act of 1938, as amended, is amended by adding at the end of the first sentence thereof the following: "Provided, That for the 1964 crop of wheat the Secretary shall conduct such referendum prior to May 15, 1963."