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Congressman Bob Dole has joined Congressman Joe Skubitz in efforts to have that portion of Kansas west of the 99th meridian included in a study to determine the feasibility of importing water from the Columbia River via the Colorado River to Kansas. If the effort is successful, the area to be included in the study would be that portion of Kansas west of a line running approximately north and south from Smith Center to Medicine Lodge, or about 40% of the total land area of Kansas.

Skubitz, a member of the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, plans to offer the amendment to H. R. 4671, which is now pending before his Committee. This bill, if passed, would authorize the Secretary of Interior to examine the long range water needs in the Upper and Lower Colorado River Western Basins, portions of Texas and Kansas, and to conduct feasibility studies of proposals to import water from outside the Colorado River Basin. "If the amendment is adopted, it could have a dramatic effect on the future economic development of Western Kansas," Dole said.

"Twenty-five years ago, any proposal to transport water from the Columbia River over and through the mountains into the Colorado River would have been labeled as fantastic and ridiculous. However, this is exactly what this study proposes to do," Skubitz said. "If it is feasible to transport water from the Columbia River to the Colorado River, then why not a study to determine the feasibility of a second step--transporting water from the Colorado River into Kansas?" Congressman Dole concluded.