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House

The Kansas/delegation voted against the so-called State Firearms Control Assistance Act Conference Report late yesterday. Congressman Bob Dole who voted for the bill when it passed the House in late July stated the final version of the bill returned from a Senate-House Conference might be pleasing to the criminal element, but certainly not to the shopkeepers, trapshooters, duck hunters, and others.

The Senate-House conferees eliminated two key provisions which made the bill unacceptable to me, Dole stated. One provision eliminated was the so-called Poff amendment which provided mandatory punishment for those using a firearm in the commission of serious crimes. The Poff amendment was watered down in Conference and would be effective against second, but not first offenders. In effect the revised version serves notice on the criminal element in America that first offenders are exempt from added punishment if a firearm is used in the commission of serious crimes.

Secondly, the House-Senate conferees eliminated a provision which was in the House bill to exempt from coverage of the bill shotgun shells and ammunition designed and used for target shooting. This, in my opinion, is an unduly restrictive limitation on those who use hunting and sporting ammunition. While ammunition used for destructive devices, pistols and revolvers should be covered there was not ample justification for including ordinary shotgun shells or metallic rifle ammunition. The small town and rural storekeeper who now stocks shotgun shells as a convenience to hunters must now obtain a federal license, pay a fee, and keep a record of every single transaction.

I favor reasonable federal controls on interstate shipment of pistols and long

guns, but, in my opinion, the Conference Report unnecessarily restricts the rights of law abiding citizens and at the same time softens criminal penalties.