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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C. Dec. 17 -- ²⁹⁶ U.S. Senator Bob Dole (R-Kans.) predicted today that Congress will approve a 15% increase in Social Security benefits.

The probable effective date, Dole said, will be January 1, 1970.

"The unanimous House action Monday has cleared the way for an agreement on Social Security benefits," Dole said. "Fortunately the House provision did not contain some of the objectionable features which had been added to the Senate version.

"I will now support the increase though the approach suggested by President Nixon seems superior," Dole said. "The President's proposal would increase benefits 10%, but in addition would permit Social Security beneficiaries to earn additional money without losing benefits. More importantly, it would contain an escalator clause which would permit benefits to be increased automatically when the cost of living increased without the necessity of a congressional O.K.

"This last feature," Dole added, "would take Social Security out of politics and, in addition, the beneficiaries would not be required to wait for congressional action. As it is now, there is always a lag of many months, or even several years from the time the cost of living increases until benefits are made available."