

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D. C., Sept. 30, 1970 -- "As we observe the 25th 'National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week' commencing this October 4th, let us consider the capabilities of all handicapped Americans with a fresh perspective." said U.S. Senator Bob Dole (R-Kans.) today in a statement on the Senate floor.

On September 22 of this year, the Senate amended the 1945 resolution to include all handicapped workers, not only the physically handicapped, but the mentally handicapped.

The Kansas Senator observed, "For the past 25 years our Nation has been tremendously progressive in the rehabilitation and employment of our disabled citizens. The majority of these preceding years have been characterized by national prosperity which has made the goal of restoring the handicapped to usefulness more easily accomplished.

"The true test of our commitment to aid the disabled, to give them the means to self-sufficiency and dignity, comes during times such as we now experience. When unemployment effects the able-bodied, employers are less inclined to employ and retain handicapped workers. Too frequently the handicapped are categorically 'last hired and first fired.'"

Dole noted that both motivation and production of most handicapped employees actually exceed that of their able-bodied co-workers. The handicapped do not want special privileges, they simply ask equal consideration with other employees.

"Let us work to further eliminate all bias and misconception that hinder handicapped individuals from knowing lives of productivity and satisfaction" urged Dole.