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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C., DEC. 22, 1970 -- U.S. Senator Bob Dole (R-Kans.) today clarified certain doubts about the provisions of the recently passed Animal Welfare Act of 1970.

In a statement on the Senate floor, Dole said that several thousand telegrams in opposition to this bill had been received at the White House and over 200 Congressional offices have contacted the Department of Agriculture as a result of outside pressure objecting to the bill.

The Kansas Senator said that it was his understanding that, "as a matter of general inquiry these objections have come from hobby dog breeders who have interpreted this bill as bringing their dogs for the first time under Federal regulation. Apparently, their objection stems from the definition of dealer in Section 3 of the bill which by omitting intervening phrases states 'dealer means any person who ... sells any animals ... for exhibition purposes or for use as pets.'"

"This definition on its face appears to bring hobby dog breeders under Federal regulation. But, this definition cannot be read by itself. It must be considered in context with the existing law which it in no way changes. The existing law (Section 3 of P.L. 89-544) specifically exempts any hobby dog breeder who derives less than a substantial portion of his income from the breeding and raising of dogs on his premises and the selling of such to a dealer or research facility.

"This provision has exempted hobby dog breeders from Federal regulation in the past, and will continue to do so in the future."

Dole said the basic intent all along has in no way been to bring hobby dog dealers under Federal regulations, but basically in an effort to enhance the humane treatment of our animals.

Dole introduced a letter from Mr. Duncan Wright, President of the American Dog Owners Association, written to President Nixon, stating that the American Dog Owners Association has no objection to the Animal Welfare bill. A letter from the Department of Agriculture ensuring that this legislation is not an effort to regulate hobby dog breeders and owners was also introduced by Dole.