

FROM: THE OFFICE OF U.S. SEN. BOB DOLE

NEW SENATE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

(202) 225-8947

100

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 14 --- U.S. Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kans.), speaking about the needs of the country's 42 million handicapped citizens, said today on the Senate floor that there are "thousands of Americans who are tied to their homes" and who are "wasting their lives."

Dole termed the situation "a national tragedy," adding, "these people could be making significant contributions to their own welfare and society through productive home work." He urged that efforts for "homebound citizens" become one of the top priorities for the handicapped.

The Kansas Senator praised the work of President Nixon's Task Force on the Physically Handicapped, particularly for its recommendation that state home work laws be comprehensively reviewed and that on-the-job training opportunities be expanded through government incentives.

Dole, who spent 39 months in hospital recovering from wounds resulting from World War II combat, urged that the Vocational Rehabilitation Act be amended to extend services to all disabled persons, not just those with disabilities "that probably could be overcome with help," as the Act presently specifies. Dole emphasized:

There should be no discrimination on the basis of severity of impairment or potential for employment. We must remember that total success in overcoming a handicap is in many cases not possible. But there are a great number of cases in which partial success is attainable and can be translated into real vocational achievement for the handicapped.

Dole urged Americans to "mount a national effort to supply the monetary and physical resources to ensure handicapped children the education to which they, as citizens of the United States, are entitled.

He said that implicit in the necessity to provide meaningful education for all children, are special education classes for handicapped children. He stressed he did not mean that "special education classes should be used to segregate the mentally and physically handicapped from the mainstream of the education process," but rather urged a "dual program of education" involving general and special personnel.