



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

New Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 225-6521

Joe Reppert—Press Secretary

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NEEDED BY RURAL AMERICANS:

INFORMATION ON FEDERAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

By Senator Bob Dole

An information gap between rural Americans and the federal government is a major but unnecessary obstacle to the revitalization of our countrysides.

This became apparent to me while participating in rural development subcommittee hearings around the country during this Session of Congress.

I and other subcommittee members learned first-hand that many small communities are not aware of the present federal programs available to assist in rural development. As an outgrowth of this realization, the Senate Committee on Agriculture, has made available a comprehensive handbook that catagorizes some 500 existing federal programs to aid rural communities.

The publication, a "Guide to Federal Programs for Rural Development," was originally published by the Independent Bankers Association of America, and now has been updated and reprinted at the request of the Senate Subcommittee on Rural Development, of which I am a member.

Although the subcommittee considers the top priority need for rural America to be a new comprehensive rural development plan for the country, at the same time, it seemed a shame that clear information was not available on the good, existing federal programs. Good information, of course, is not a cure-all to the problems facing rural development, but certainly this effort to narrow the information gap in the form of a very readable handbook, is a very worthwhile project.

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Farmers and small town officials and business leaders have a particular need for a central reference for federal funds, as unlike many big city leaders, they have no full-time experts whose only jobs are to uncover sources of federal money. And, the availability of this "Guide to Federal Programs for Rural Development" goes along with my work in the Senate to put our rural areas on a par with our larger towns and cities in terms of community services and employment opportunities.

The handbook can be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, for \$2.50.