



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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WASHINGTON, D.C. -- In an effort to secure Impact Aid funding for some 95 Kansas school districts declared ineligible for the funding on Thursday, Senator Bob Dole announced plans to introduce an amendment to reinstate their eligibility. Dole said his amendment would be offered to the 1974 Labor HEW Appropriations Bill which will be considered by the Senate Appropriations Committee next week.

The General Counsel's office at the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare told Dole Thursday afternoon that the State of Kansas had been found in non-compliance with provisions of the Federal Impact Aid law, and is therefore considered ineligible for further aid. Impact Aid is given to school districts where children of federal employees are in attendance as students. Formal notification of the HEW ruling is expected Friday.

The funding problem has arisen as a result of a conflict between provisions of the federal law and the new Kansas School District Equalization Act passed in the last session of the Kansas Legislature. If passed, Dole's amendment would resolve the problems for at least the coming year.

Dole said he chose the appropriations bill because it will be acted upon soon and provides an opportunity for timely action. He said quick action was needed because in at least one district, Ft. Leavenworth, there is a serious danger that operating funds will all be spent by November 1, and the district would then be forced to close its doors.

In August, Dole met with Ft. Leavenworth school officials and others on this

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problem. According to state law, most school districts across the state would be reimbursed by the state for the loss of federal assistance under the Impact Aid Program. "This would mean a \$7 million penalty charged against the state's taxpayers," Dole said, "merely because there is a technical disagreement between state and federal law. Kansans are being punished because their legislators have enacted a progressive State Education Assistance Law, and the federal law must be changed."

More comprehensive reform in the Impact Aid Program has been proposed in the Education Bill now being considered in the U.S. House of Representatives. State Senator Joseph Harder, Chairman of the Joint Committee on School Finance has testified before the U.S. House Education Subcommittee regarding the needed changes in the federal law, and is to appear in Washington before the Senate Committee on Friday. Dole said that the House Committee has given its support to the Kansas recommendation and that HEW officials have indicated support for repealing the provision of the federal statute which conflicts with Kansas law.

These comprehensive changes, however, will most likely not be enacted until next year, and the Dole amendment is intended to provide relief until the comprehensive legislation can receive congressional consideration.