



NEWS from **U.S. Senator Bob Dole**

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DOLE INTRODUCES RURAL HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Senator Bob Dole introduced legislation Monday that would authorize the appropriation of \$300 million over the next three years for assistance to rural health delivery programs. Dole's Rural Health Care Delivery Improvement Act, oriented specifically toward the unique needs of rural communities, would establish an Office of Rural Health within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The Director of the Office of Rural Health would have the authority to award grants, contracts, loans, and loan guarantees to applicants who wish to develop rural health care delivery models. In addition to the administration of the grant and loan programs, the Director would be responsible for: providing liaison among all federal agencies to help coordinate rural health care programs; periodically evaluating HEW health care programs and recommending needed changes; and coordinating model programs with National Health Service Corps projects to encourage the expansion of private medicine to rural areas in extreme need.

Operation of the programs would be reviewed by an 11-member Rural Health Care Advisory Committee responsible for advising the Director of the Office of Rural Health with respect to the overall planning, policies, and objectives of the rural health program.

"This bill is based upon the premise that community health programs can best be planned and implemented at the community and regional level. It provides assistance so that communities can develop a comprehensive health program suited to their own needs and desires, but yet emphasizes the need for organization and regional cooperation," Dole said.