



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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SENATE ACCEPTS DOLE AMENDMENT EXEMPTING CUSTOM OPERATORS FROM REGULATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C.--The Senate today accepted Senator Bob Dole's amendment which would exempt custom cutters, hay balers and sheep shearing operators from recent Department of Labor migrant worker regulations.

Describing the new regulations as a "problem of major proportions in Kansas and other agricultural states," Dole said the Labor Department's extension of the Farm Labor Contractor Registration Act to include custom combine and sheep shearing operators is a confusion of two entirely different situations. "The FLCRA was intended to end abuses against migrant workers and against farmers that use the services of farm labor contractors," the Kansas Senator continued. "But custom operators have no record of exploiting or abusing their employees or the farmers they contract with. They do have a record of providing a very important and timely service to farmers and ranchers."

Dole said if the exemption were not granted, each custom operator would be required to file 25 different forms and statements. "Many of these forms and statements would have to be submitted repeatedly for each employee, for each vehicle and for each job performed by the operator — farmers hiring the service would also have additional paperwork requirements. The unnecessary and inappropriate regulations would cause severe hardship, and in some cases, result in custom operators simply quitting the business."

Urging prompt action, Dole said he hoped the House of Representatives would agree to the bill as amended or to a conference report that includes the exemption. "The exemption will hopefully become law well before the harvest starts — possibly within the next two weeks."