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DOLE URGES STATE PASSAGE OF NUTRITION EDUCATION PLAN

TOPEKA -- Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.) today said he was "shocked to learn that the Finance Council of the Kansas Legislature has refused to move on the nutrition education and training plan for Kansas."

Last week the Finance Council refused to consider and approve the use of a two-year grant awarded Kansas by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the upgrading of school food services and nutrition instruction.

The grant program, based on an apportionment of 50 cents per student enrolled in grades K through 12, would give Kansas \$238,102 a year for two years to upgrade school cafeteria personnel in their foodservice management skills, instruct students about the relationships between diet and health, and develop a cadre of teachers to do this nutrition education. The state contribution to the program is one-half of the administrative funds, which are limited to 15 percent of the grant.

The underlying purpose of the grant is to address allegations of stagnant participation rates, poor food selection on the part of students, and excessive food and beverage waste in our school meal programs.

The bill was passed by Congress in November 1977, authorizing \$26.2 million a year for two years in an effort to turn the school food program around. But Dole charged that the Administration was slow in getting out the necessary guidelines to states so they could apply. Dole introduced a bill (S. 2564) in February which would have pushed the two-year program up a year, thus giving all states ample time to apply for these education and training monies. His accusations of footdragging got the Administration regulations on their way.

"And now I learn that my own state of Kansas has failed to take adequate measures to ensure the funding of this program," he said. "I urge the Kansas Legislature to adopt the training and nutrition education plan as soon as possible, so Kansas can get about the business of upgrading the quality of meal service and nutrition education instruction in all the Kansas schools."

A recent USDA-sponsored survey of over 8,500 school food service workers in 2,300 schools found that more than six out of 10 were promoted or hired as manager without prior training. Only three out of 10 employees surveyed had completed training in the past 10 years, and 44 percent indicated a desire for more training.