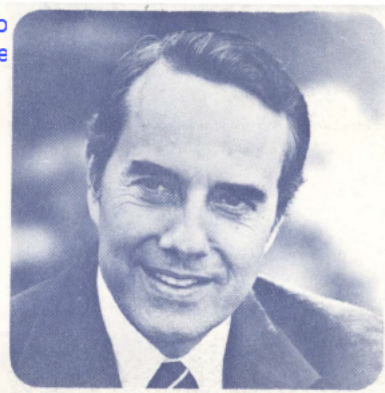


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SENATE PASSES IMPORTANT TEST VOTE AGAINST OIL IMPORT FEE

WASHINGTON -- The Senate, by approving a Dole-Metzenbaum budget amendment today, took a significant step forward in removing roadblocks for opponents of the Administration's oil import fee.

The Senate vote on the measure was 75-19 in favor, indicating broad Senate dissatisfaction with the import fee, which is scheduled to go into effect Thursday.

"This is one of the most encouraging breakthroughs we have yet had in this fight against the oil import fee," Dole said. "The vote today on this amendment, which was sponsored by myself and Senators Metzenbaum and Roth, will enable us to get a resolution of disapproval or other similar blocking action to the President's desk quickly, thus removing major procedural hang-ups.

"The Senate has clearly stated its unhappiness with this tax, and I think has resoundly said today that it does not believe the President when he says this is a gasoline conservation measure.

"This is purely and simply another in a long line of taxes on the American people. On Thursday, every American, rich or poor, whether living in cities or rural areas, will pay an extra dime a gallon when they go to the pump. Will this greatly hinder consumption? I don't think so.

"Yet the President claims we may reduce oil consumption by 100,000 barrels a day this year. My arithmetic says that the American taxpayer will pay about \$345 in new taxes for each barrel we save.

"In addition to increasing conservation, the Administration claims that this tax will be an important part of their anti-inflation program. But in fact, even the Administration admits this action will add three-quarters of a percent to the current rate of inflation. And if OPEC gets the idea that this fee shows that the American people are willing to tolerate higher prices, we could see still greater inflationary effects."

Dole indicated that the next crucial test of the oil import fee would come this Wednesday in the Senate Finance Committee. Dole has already introduced S.J. 159, a joint resolution of disapproval which has won the support of 33 senators. That or similar amendments will be considered in committee in hopes of derailing the fee before this Thursday's implementation date.