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DOLE PREPARED TO OFFER AMENDMENT TO BLOCK OIL IMPORT FEE; DISAPPOINTED WITH HOUSE RULING

WASHINGTON -- Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan.) this morning expressed his disappointment that the House Rules Committee failed to report out a rule for the Debt Limit Bill which would have allowed the full House a vote on the oil import fee question.

"It's obvious the leadership in the House, along with President Carter, is strongly in favor of imposing a 10-cent-per-gallon gas tax on the American consumer," Dole said. "I realize that this morning's action in the Rules Committee may preclude a vote of the full House on the question of a gas tax, unless those opponents of the tax are successful in overriding the House leadership.

"I want to assure my colleagues in both the House and the Senate that when the Debt Limit Bill comes before the Senate for consideration, I plan to introduce an amendment which would block the April 2, 1980, import fee, which is really not an import fee, but a 10-cent-per-gallon import tax on domestic consumers.

"I have been pressing for prompt action to stop this tax from the start. I introduced a resolution of disapproval to block the fee, which in a test vote on the budget resolution was solidly agreed to by the Senate. Yet despite the over-whelming sentiment in both Houses to reject the import fee, certain members of the House leadership have let it be known, through the press and otherwise, that they are in favor of this 10-cent-per-gallon tax on the American people, and they intend to, see that no resolution is adopted to keep this tax from going into effect.

"But regardless of House action, the Senate has gone on record as opposing this ill-conceived revenue measure, and I intend to pursue legislative remedies to ensure that the President's fee is finally put out of its misery. It may be that the only way to do this is through an amendment to the Debt Limit Bill, which I am prepared to offer."