

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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ROCK ISLAND DIRECTED SERVICE TO BE APPROVED TODAY, DOLE ANNOUNCES

GOODLAND, KS -- Senator Bob Dole (R.-Kan.) said today officials at the Interstate Commerce Commission have informed him that the Commission will approve an order directing 90 days of rail service on nearly 200 miles of track in north-central Kansas. A formal vote is expected late Thursday afternoon.

Track between Phillipsburg and Manhattan will be operated for at least 90 days beginning in early September by the firm of Morrison-Knudsen. Service could be extended from Manhattan to McFarland at a later date. The application was filed by the Mid States Port Authority.

"The ICC is approving this application with record speed, taking only a couple of days instead of the usual week or two," Senator Dole said. "The Commission obviously recognizes the crisis facing Kansas farmers. Elevators in Phillipsburg, Smith Center, Mankato, Belleville, Clay Center and other communities along the abandoned Rock Island line are spilling over with wheat. Now we can begin to make room for the fall harvest."

Dole also expressed hope that this service could pave the way for permanent rail service across northern Kansas. "The communities in this part of the state are the last to receive rail service in the wake of Rock Island Railroad's bankruptcy. The Tucumcari line from Liberal to Topeka is being served by the Cottonbelt. The track south of Herington through Wichita is being served by the Katy. Kansas has been lucky to have nearly three-fourths of its Rock Island track in operation. Yet, the northern line, which serves thousands of farmers and carries a large percentage of Kansas grain, hasn't seen a boxcar in months. I will continue to work to assure that this temporary service is only the first step towards a permanent solution for the communities of northern Kansas."