

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE FIGHTS MOVE TO LIGHTEN PENALTIES FOR PRICE-FIXERS

WASHINGTON -- Senator Robert Dole (R.-Kan.) said today he is strongly opposed to a proposal now being circulated by Senator Strom Thurmond (R.-S.C.) which would substantially limit the penalties assessed persons found guilty in price-fixing cases.

The Thurmond proposal would be in the form of an amendment to a bill now pending before the Senate Judiciary Committee that would permit unsuccessful defendants in price-fixing cases to share damages awards on a proportional basis according to their degree of guilt.

"Price-fixing is a conspiracy, and as such, can not be afforded the luxury of a loophole," Dole said. "Anti-trust laws are understandably tough, and deserve in-depth study and careful legislative review."

Certain provisions of the bill would limit the size of damage awards against defendants in the case, and the amendment proposed by Senator Thurmond would allow the courts to apply these sections of the bill to pending cases, even though judgements may have already been obtained.

"The Thurmond proposal would clearly allow the reduced penalty provisions to become retroactive, not only jeopardizing pending litigation, but also threatening those plaintiffs who have every right to expect equitable compensation following judgement in a price-fixing case," Dole added.

"In Kansas alone there are some 65 companies that could be damaged by the Thurmond amendment if it became law. I don't think it is fair to change the rules in the middle of the game, " Dole concluded, in reference to cases now in court that could be unduly affected by the retroactive nature of the Thurmond proposal.