

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE CALLS FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ON A BALANCED BUDGET

WASHINGTON -- Citing Congress' track record for spending and big deficits, Senator Robert Dole (R.-Kan.) today urged his Senate colleagues to approve a proposed constitutional amendment that would require lawmakers to balance the federal budget.

Dole made the appeal today on the Senate floor, as the upper chamber considered the constitutional question. According to the Kansas Republican, public opinion has clearly rallied to the support of a balanced budget amendment.

"This is an idea that has been around for quite some time, but one that has gained momentum in recent years because of the growing public realization that there is something fundamentally wrong with the way we conduct budget policy," Dole said. "Perhaps if this kind of amendment had been in place 20 years ago we wouldn't be dealing now with the horror of a \$100 billion deficit."

Dole also noted that history tends to support the concept of a constitutionally mandated balanced budget.

"The evidence of history is overwhelming that the founding forefathers took for granted the notion that fiscal restraint and the avoidance of debt would be the hallmark of our national government," Dole said. "We simply have to return to that sense of fiscal responsibility. We are not considering this proposal merely because it is popular, although in this case there is no question the people are ahead of the politicians. The American taxpayer understands that congressional spending habits have to be put under a firm limitation, and that only new procedures, externally imposed -- such as a constitutional amendment -- can do the job," Dole concluded.