

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE APPROVES DOLE FOOD STAMP BILL

WASHINGTON -- The Senate Agriculture Committee today endorsed legislation which Nutrition Subcommittee Chairman Bob Dole (R-Kansas) said will bring about significant budget savings and reforms to the Food Stamp Program. The Dole bill, S. 2493, was adopted by the Committee as the mark-up vehicle, and what emerged from the Committee process left the Food Stamp Reform Act of 1982 essentially intact.

This legislation would reduce program expenditures by about \$815 million in FY 1983, \$843 million in FY 1984, and \$908 million in FY 1985. It also includes provisions to strengthen current work requirements for able-bodied participants, enhance program administration, and crack down on state error rates which have previously amounted to a loss of about \$1 billion to the taxpayers through overissuances and payments to ineligible.

"It was very rewarding to see S. 2493 emerge from this committee process essentially intact, with only some minor compromises along the way," said Dole. "This has been a very lengthy mark-up, but I am very satisfied with the Committee's approach to food stamp reauthorization and reconciliation -- it is reasonable in these times of economic distress. Again this year, we tried to design budget cutting proposals with a scalpel instead of a meat-ax. Those who are in need of program benefits will be protected."

"I am especially pleased that the Committee decided to extend the program authorization for three years, instead of just one, because, more than any time in its legislative history, the food stamp program is in need of a period of relative stability," Dole said. "This was perhaps the most constructive thing that we could have done for the program, and it reestablishes its traditional coordination with the Farm Bill authorization."