

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE

ITZHAK PERLMAN BENEFIT CONCERT FOR THE DISABILITY RIGHTS EDUCATION AND DEFENSE FUND (DREDF)

WASHINGTON -- Kansas Senator Bob Dole praised the work of the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF), at tonight's Kennedy Center fundraising concert by violinist Itzhak Perlman. DREDF will use the money raised to establish a national foundation that will provide seed money to organizations operated for and by the disabled.

Senator Dole, Senator Lowell Weicker (R-CT), Rep. Tony Coelho (D-CA), and Rep. Claude Pepper (D-FL) are co-sponsors of the benefit. Vice President and Mrs. George Bush are co-chairs of a reception following the concert.

"This is an historic night. It is the first national public awareness and fundraising benefit by and for disabled people and the disability rights movement. Itzhak Perlman is to be saluted for taking such a prominent role in promoting the goals of integration and equal opportunity for all disabled people," said Senator Dole.

"As a public and private citizen, I would like to underline the fact that this campaign is of great importance to our society as a whole," said Dole. "This country has always represented a land of opportunity for those less fortunate, whether due to economic or other circumstances. The American public, as well as policy makers, must become increasingly aware that, as a nation, it is to our benefit to integrate disabled people into all aspects of community life."

"Disabled people represent an abundance of untapped resources for this country. Even while much progress has been made in overcoming architectural and transportation barriers, attitudinal barriers continue to remain a last, difficult obstacle. That is why the work of the Disability Rights Education Defense Fund is so important," said Dole. "Laws can only do so much -- they can be enforced, but along with policy changes must come attitudinal changes and acceptance."