



DOLE HEADS LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL TASK FORCE TO FORM SPECIAL NEEDS DIVISION FOR DISABLED YOUTH

Senator Bob Dole, Little League Baseball officials, and leaders in programs for youth with disabilities gathered in the Republican Leadership office of the U.S. Capitol this week to finalize plans for a new division of Little League structured for young people with mental and/or physical disabilities.

According to Senator Dole, Dr. Creighton J. Hale, President and Chief Executive Officer of Little League Baseball, and the group discussed details for the framework of the program after hearing from volunteers who have established special needs teams in their communities. Under the traditional Little League divisional structure, the newest segment is for youth who are unable to participate in a conventional league.

"Soon all young people will have the opportunity to benefit from a program sponsored by an organization recognized for unsurpassed leadership in sports," said Dole, who is chairman of the task force. "I am pleased that Little League Baseball is launching this wide-ranging effort in a sport which aims to build self-esteem and encourages the values of teamwork, citizenship, and fair play."

Other members of the task force include: (from left to right) Robert Fiondella, President, Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance Company; Ms. Pat Hunt, Director of Special Needs Division of "NW 45 Little League," Houston, Texas; Thomas Igleski, Vice President, CNA Insurance Company; Dr. Hale; Senator Dole; and General Robert M. Montague, Executive Director, Special Olympics International. Not pictured are: Senator John F. Kerry (D-MA); and Kirk Bauer, Executive Director, National Handicapped Sports and Recreation Association.

Dole added that the program is expected to be available on a nationwide basis early in 1989 and will be coordinated through local Little League representatives.

9/23/88 release