

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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SENATOR DOLE WORKS TO MAKE SENATE MORE ACCESSIBLE TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Washington, D.C. -- Senator Dole introduced legislation today to require televised broadcasts of Senate floor proceedings to be closed-captioned for the deaf and hearing-impaired.

"More than 20 million Americans with hearing impairments remain shut out from the day-to-day workings of the Senate," Dole said. "It's time that the Senate open its doors to citizens with hearing impairments so they can share in the debates that shape our nation's future."

Closed-captioning technology allows the audio portion of a program to be displayed in printed form on the television screen. The captions are received if a special decoding device is attached to the television set. Captioning is currently used in broadcasts of presidential speeches, press conferences, news programs, and certain Senate committee hearings.

Senator Dole also received a tactile model of the Capitol Hill area presented to the Senate by the Department of Education during a ceremony on the Capitol steps. The scale model is designed for use by visually-impaired visitors to Washington, D.C. It is currently located in the Senate wing of the U.S. Capitol. Additional models will be placed at other strategic locations in the Capitol and circulated around the country by the Library of Congress.

The scale models are part of a government-sponsored project called the "Tactile Capitol" which is designed to make Washington, D.C., more accessible to people with vision impairments and other disabilities. As a member of the Senate Rules Committee, which authorized the project, Senator Dole was actively involved in its promotion.

"I'm proud to be able to play a part in helping Washington, D.C., become the most accessible capital city in the world," Dole said. "All Americans should have the opportunity to appreciate the grandeur of our Nation's capital."

As part of the project, Senator Dole's office will be able to provide constituents with free tactile-braille maps covering Capitol Hill, the Mall and monument areas. The maps will be available in Senator Dole's Washington office beginning in November 1988.

Senator Dole's office also recently upgraded its telecommunication device for the deaf (TDD). The TDD is a small device on which callers type a message which is received by a similar machine. Senator Dole's office has been equipped with a TDD for over two years. Kansans wishing to contact Senator Dole's Washington office via TDD can call (202) 224-7811 Monday thru Friday from 8:00am to 6:00pm and Saturday from 9:00am to 12:00 noon (CDT).