

*Bob Dole*



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Contact: Clarkson Hine  
(202) 224-5358

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE

### CRIME UP, FEDERAL PROSECUTIONS DOWN; DOLE & HATCH SEEK ANSWERS FROM JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON, DC -- Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole (R-KS) and Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT), ranking Republican on Senate Judiciary Committee, today sent the following letter to Attorney General Janet Reno soliciting an explanation for the apparent decline in the number of new federal criminal prosecutions:

Dear Attorney General Reno:

According to information compiled by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, there has been a significant drop in the number of criminal cases being commenced in federal courts throughout the country. Since the Justice Department is the chief federal law enforcement agency, these statistics suggest that the Department is taking an approach to criminal law enforcement that is less aggressive than the approach taken during the Bush Administration.

According to the Administrative Office, a total of 47,467 criminal cases were initiated in federal district court between July 1, 1991 and June 30, 1992. Between July 1, 1993 and June 30, 1994, the total number of criminal cases dropped to 44,919. This represents more than a 5% decline in the total number of new criminal prosecutions.

An analysis of the number of prosecutions initiated for specific criminal offenses during the same time periods--July 1, 1991 through June 30, 1992 and July 1, 1993 through June 30, 1994--yields the following results:

- \* Robbery prosecutions--Down 9.5% (from 1,804 to 1,631)
- \* Assault prosecutions--Down 17.6% (from 641 to 528)
- \* Prosecutions for Larceny and Theft--Down 8% (from 3,583 to 3,294)
- \* Sex Offense Prosecutions--Down 11.4% (from 393 to 348)
- \* Prosecutions under the Federal Drug Laws--Down 9.2% (from 12,512 to 11,356)

Even prosecutions for weapons and firearms offenses are down by a staggering 23%--from 4,132 to 3,178.

As you know, the Justice Department recently released its annual Crime Victimization Survey, which shows that the number of "personal crimes," including rape, other sexual attacks, robbery, assault, and personal thefts, increased by an estimated 6.7% between 1992 and 1993. In light of the Survey, one can fairly draw the troubling conclusion that the number of criminal prosecutions initiated by the Justice Department has gone down, while crime continues to go up.

Attorney General Reno, if we are wrong on this point, please let us know. But if we are right, we would appreciate an explanation as to why the number of federal criminal prosecutions has declined so substantially.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,

*Bob Dole*  
BOB DOLE

*Orrin Hatch*  
ORRIN G. HATCH