

Bob Dole



**NEWS
FROM:**

**U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS
SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER**

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104TH CONGRESS

AS 2ND SESSION BEGINS, DOLE OFFERS SENATE PROGRESS REPORT

On January 3, 1995 we began the first session of the historic 104th Congress -- the first Republican Congress in 40 years. On that day, I spoke from this podium and outlined the agenda the Republican Senate would be advancing.

Exactly one year has now passed since that day. I would note that the last time we moved from the first session to the second session of Congress on the same day was January 3, 1992. So as we begin this second session, I would now like to offer a progress report to the American people--detailing the promises we kept in 1995, and the work we hope to complete in 1996.

Returning Power to the States & to the People

As I said on the first day of this session, the primary goal of this Congress would not be to pass unnecessary new laws--but instead to remember a timeless one--the 10th amendment to our Constitution.

That, of course, is the amendment that sets out the principle of federalism, stating that "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states, respectively, or to the people."

Shifting power out of Washington, and returning it to our states, our cities, our neighborhoods, and to the American people. That's what the 10th Amendment is all about.

And that's exactly what the 104th Congress has been about since day one--and since Senate Bill 1--which put an end to unfunded federal mandates.

That's what we were about when we passed landmark welfare reform legislation that will give our states the flexibility to design programs that best meet the needs of their citizens.

Continuing the Fight for a Balanced Budget

And that's what we've been about these past few weeks, as we continue our fight for a balanced budget that will ensure a brighter future for our children and grandchildren.

As budget negotiations continue, it is important to note that for as much as this Congress has accomplished in giving government back to the American people, there is more we could have accomplished--had President Clinton not time and again stood in the way of fundamental change.

In fact, it was President Clinton's active opposition that prevented the Senate by just one vote from joining the House in sending a Balanced Budget Amendment to our states for approval. And it was his veto of the Balanced Budget Act of 1995 that put us in the situation we are now in.

Had President Clinton not chosen to engage on a campaign to scare the American people, America's seniors would be beginning 1996 secure in the knowledge that Medicare was solvent.

It is also worth noting that President Clinton's misguided insistence on the status quo has prevented the enactment of much needed regulatory reform legislation which would ease the burden of government red tape and regulations on America's small business men and women.

Let me make it clear that although we are very frustrated with the President's actions, we have not given up on a balanced budget or on regulatory reform.

The Fight Against Crime & Drugs

Something else we haven't given up on is doing everything we can to help law-abiding Americans in the fight against crime and drugs.

In the wake of the terrible tragedy in Oklahoma City, the Senate moved quickly to pass anti-terrorism legislation. And at

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our insistence, this legislation included historic habeas corpus reform, which would put a limit on frivolous lawsuits that convicted felons use to clog our courts and delay justice.

Republicans also included a number of tough anti crime provisions in the Commerce, State, Justice Department Appropriations Bill. Unfortunately, President Clinton vetoed the bill.

I know that the distinguished chair of the Judiciary Committee, Senator Hatch, will continue to look for ways in which Congress can provide the leadership in the fight against crime that has been missing at the White House.

We took steps to do that just last month, when Speaker Gingrich and I announced the formation of a Congressional Task Force on National Drug Policy.

A series of national surveys have shown a very disturbing increase in drug use among America's youth. Drug use among young people was down--way down--in the 1980's, when Presidents Reagan and Bush made the war on drugs a national priority. And these surveys show what has happened now that the Clinton Administration has all but declared a cease-fire.

The Speaker and I have charged this Task Force with convening the nation's top experts, and coming up with an Anti-Drug Action plan which we can implement in the coming year.

Designing A Flatter, Fairer, & Simpler Tax System

Earlier this year, the Speaker and I also asked Jack Kemp to Chair a fourteen-member blue-ribbon national commission on Economic Growth and Tax Reform.

We asked the Commission to start with a blank piece of paper, and to design a tax system that is flatter, fairer, and simpler--one that strengthens families, and one that encourages, savings, investments, strong economic growth, and greater opportunity for all our people.

The Kemp Commission will issue it's report next week, and I anticipate their recommendations will significantly advance the tax reform debate. Hopefully, these recommendations will lead us to a new system so we can end the IRS as we know it.

We also made substantial progress this past year in our efforts to pass a line item veto, to bring much needed reform to America's telecommunications industry, and to restore some common sense to our civil justice system. With our House colleagues, we hope to put the finishing touches on both of these important issues early this year.

I also say with pride that just as this Republican Congress has insisted on returning power to the people, we also have made clear that Congress is not a "ruling class" that is above the people.

Making Congress Accountable to the American People

While we were in the minority, Republicans fought for legislation that would subject Congress to the same laws we impose on everybody else. And once we were in the majority, we were able to do just that by passing the Congressional Accountability Act.

With Republicans in the majority, Congress was able to enact into law legislation that will shine additional sunlight into the lobbying process, and we also placed a strict limit on gifts that Members of Congress and Senators can receive.

And with Republicans in the majority, we were able to cut more than \$200 million from the Congressional budget--the largest cut in forty years.

Protecting Our National Security

One thing we didn't cut, however, was America's national security. Over the past few years, the Clinton Administration has come dangerously close to gutting our national security budget, and this Congress reversed that ill-advised course.

Let me conclude, by thanking all Senators on both sides of the aisle. Our first session was a lengthy one, and at times, the debates have been contentious.

But I believe that all of us can take great pride in the fact that history will reflect we were all part of a truly revolutionary United States Congress: A Congress that kept its promises. A Congress that fought to change the status quo. A Congress that brought fundamental change to Washington, D.C. A Congress that, above all, remembered the 10th Amendment by returning power to our states and to the American people.

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* Remarks delivered on Senate floor, approximately 12:05 p.m.