

**NEWS
FROM:**

**U . S . S E N A T O R F O R K A N S A S
S E N A T E R E P U B L I C A N L E A D E R**

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DRUG SMUGGLING PROSECUTION UPDATE

DOLE URGES JUSTICE DEPARTMENT PROBE OF REPORTED CLINTON ADMINISTRATION POLICY ALLOWING ARRESTED DRUG SMUGGLERS TO GO FREE; SENATE TO GO ON RECORD IN FAVOR OF VIGOROUS PROSECUTION

WASHINGTON -- Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole today made the following statement on the floor of the Senate regarding a Sense of the Senate resolution he plans to introduce tomorrow. The text of the resolution is attached:

After reading a May 13th report in the Los Angeles Times, I wrote to Attorney General Reno expressing my shock at reports that Clinton administration officials are letting drug smugglers go free as a matter of official policy.

Although I have not yet heard back from Attorney General Reno, this is a disturbing matter that requires action now. Drug use among our children is on the rise and is contributing to the rise in juvenile crime.

Therefore, tomorrow I plan to offer a Sense of the Senate Resolution calling on Attorney General Reno to investigate this matter and report back to Congress in 30 days; and calling on the Attorney General to ensure that any policy that allows drug smugglers to go free is stopped, and that all such persons be vigorously prosecuted.

The Clinton administration has been indifferent at best to the War on Drugs right from the beginning when President Clinton largely dismantled the drug czar's office. I hope my colleagues will join me in sending a strong message that, for the sake of our children today and tomorrow, we believe we must aggressively put these drug smugglers -- who are nothing more than merchants of death -- where they belong, behind bars.

SENSE OF THE SENATE RESOLUTION ON THE ADMINISTRATION'S PRACTICE REGARDING THE PROSECUTION OF DRUG SMUGGLERS

WHEREAS, drugs use is devastating to the nation, particularly among juveniles, and has led juveniles to become involved in interstate gangs and to participate in violent crime;

WHEREAS, drug use has experienced a dramatic resurgence among our youth;

WHEREAS, the number of youths aged 12-17 using marijuana has increased from 1.6 million in 1992 to 2.9 million in 1994, and the category of "recent marijuana use" increased a staggering 200% among 14 to 15-year-olds over the same period;

WHEREAS, since 1992, there has been a 52% jump in the number of high school seniors using drugs on a monthly basis, even as worrisome declines are noted in peer disapproval of drug use;

WHEREAS, 1 in 3 high school students uses marijuana;

WHEREAS, 12 to 17-year-olds who use marijuana are 85% more likely to graduate to cocaine than those who abstain from marijuana;

WHEREAS, juveniles who reach 21 without ever having used drugs almost never try them later in life;

(MORE)

WHEREAS, the latest results from the Drug Abuse Warning Network show that marijuana-related episodes jumped 39% and are running at 155% above the 1990 level, and that methamphetamine cases have risen 256% over the 1991 level;

WHEREAS, between February 1993 and February 1995 the retail price of a gram of cocaine fell from \$172 to \$137, and that of a gram of heroin also fell from \$2,032 to \$1,278;

WHEREAS, it has been reported that the Department of Justice, through the United States Attorney for the Southern District of California, has adopted a policy of allowing certain foreign drug smugglers to avoid prosecution altogether by being released to Mexico;

WHEREAS, it has been reported that in the past year approximately 2,300 suspected narcotics traffickers were taken into custody for bringing illegal drugs across the border, but approximately one in four were returned to their country of origin without being prosecuted;

WHEREAS, it has been reported that the U.S. Customs Service is operating under guidelines limiting any prosecution in marijuana cases to cases involving 125 pounds of marijuana or more;

WHEREAS, it has been reported that suspects possessing as much as 32 pounds of methamphetamine and 37,000 Quaalude tablets, were not prosecuted but were, instead, allowed to return to their countries of origin after their drugs and vehicles were confiscated;

WHEREAS, it has been reported that after a seizure of 158 pounds of cocaine, one defendant was cited and released because there was no room at the federal jail and charges against her were dropped;

WHEREAS, it has been reported that some smugglers have been caught two or more times -- even in the same week -- yet still were not prosecuted;

WHEREAS, the number of defendants prosecuted for violations of the federal drug laws has dropped from 25,033 in 1992 to 22,926 in 1995;

WHEREAS, the efforts of law enforcement officers deployed against drug smugglers are severely undermined by insufficiently vigorous prosecution policies of federal prosecutors;

WHEREAS, this Congress has increased the funding of the Federal Bureau of Prisons by 11.7% over the 1995 appropriations level;

WHEREAS, this Congress has increased the funding of the Immigration and Naturalization Service by 23.5% over the 1995 appropriations level;

THEREFORE be it resolved:

THAT it is the Sense of the Senate that the Attorney General promptly should investigate this matter and report, within 30 days, to the Chair of the Senate and House Committees on the Judiciary;

THAT the Attorney General should change the policy of the United States Attorney for the Southern District of California in order to ensure that cases involving the smuggling of drugs into the United States are vigorously prosecuted; and

THAT the Attorney General should direct all United States Attorneys vigorously to prosecute persons involved in the importation of illegal drugs into the United States.

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