

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

DOLE SCHEDULES NEW VOTE ON BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT: **CHALLENGES PRESIDENT CLINTON, ONLY MAN STANDING BETWEEN** **BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT & AMERICAN PEOPLE**

Since the American people put Republicans in control of Congress, a consensus has developed that we must balance the budget. We have succeeded in making a balanced budget a national priority. Perhaps no policy is more important to the personal economic future of Americans, to the future of our children, and to the future of our nation.

Last year, under Republican leadership, Congress passed a budget that would balance by the year 2002. President Clinton vetoed that budget, and denied America the brighter future that would have resulted: higher standards of living; more real economic growth; lower interest rates, reducing what Americans will pay for home mortgages, car loans, and student loans; an increase in savings rates; higher productivity; and relief from the crushing burden of debt.

Yet, despite his veto, the President and his allies in Congress have argued ever since that they indeed do want to balance the budget.

Since almost everyone agrees we should balance the budget by at least the year 2002, we should take the next logical step, and do what it takes to make certain that we fulfill our commitment and pass a Constitutional amendment.

The Senate last year engaged in a month-long debate on the amendment to the Constitution, culminating in a 65-35 vote in favor of sending the amendment to the States for ratification. The amendment actually fell one vote short of the 67 votes needed. I supported the amendment, but had to change my vote to "no" in order to give us the option to call the amendment up for a vote in the future.

Obligation to Future Generations of Americans

During the week of June 3rd, it is my intention to fulfill the commitment I made to hold another vote on the Balanced Budget Amendment. I am not under any illusions. But with so much at stake, I feel we have an obligation to future generations of Americans to make the effort.

Only one man stands between the Balanced Budget Amendment and the American people -- President Clinton. I would hope President Clinton would change his position on the Balanced Budget Amendment. The upcoming vote will give President Clinton the opportunity to demonstrate the kind of leadership that the American people are demanding. The Balanced Budget Amendment will succeed only if the President lends his unqualified support to this effort.

Only President Clinton Can Deliver Needed Votes

Only the President can deliver the Democrat votes necessary to send the Balanced Budget Amendment to the States. This vote will give my colleagues who have supported the amendment in the past, but voted against it last year, another opportunity to "come home again" -- an opportunity to do the most important thing we can be asked to do, and that's make a positive difference. President Clinton, who persuaded six of my colleagues to vote "no," now has the opportunity to repair the damage. It's not very often we get a second chance to do the right thing. But I'm offering the President that opportunity.

Trust the American People

As I said during the debate last year, when all is said and done, the debate over this amendment comes down to one simple question: does the United States Senate trust the American people? And does President Clinton trust the American people?

(more)

It's that simple. Passing this amendment in itself does not change the Constitution. The Founding Fathers did not give Congress that power. Instead, they reserved that power to the States and to the people. Most of us say we are for balancing the budget. We should not deny our home states the opportunity to give us the backbone to do it.

I look forward to this important effort in the ongoing fight for America's future.

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** remarks delivered on Senate floor, approximately 11:30 AM.