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KANSAS

STANDING COMMITTEES:
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY
BUDGET
FINANCE
SELECT AND SPECIAL COMMITTEE
NUTRITION AND HUMAN NEEDS

United States Senate

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REPORT TO SENIOR CITIZENS

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FROM SENATOR BOB DOLE

The 95th Congress is now well into its third month. We are busy with new legislation, reviewing present policies and programs, and holding confirmation hearings on new appointments.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Before January 1, 1977, a Social Security beneficiary lost \$1 for each \$2 of income over \$210 earned each month. Now, one may earn up to \$250 without penalty. Also, a provision to exempt the value of one's home when determining eligibility for SSI payments was included in the 1976 Social Security Amendments.

INCOME TAX

Effective January 1, 1977, the capital gains tax on the sale of your home may be excluded from taxable income if you sell it for \$35,000 or less. Before, the previous allowance was \$20,000. An individual may claim this deduction once during his lifetime, and must have occupied the residence at least 5 of the 8 years prior to its sale.

If you would like detailed information or advice when preparing your tax form, the IRS has prepared a publication, "Tax Benefits for Older Americans," No. 554, which contains helpful suggestions. You may pick this up from your local IRS office.

If you run into problems while preparing your Federal income tax returns, the IRS has a toll-free number you can call for help. It is 800-362-2190. If you have problems with your Kansas income tax returns, call 913-296-3051. The phone number in Kansas is not a toll-free number.

WRAP-UP OF THE 94TH CONGRESS

By the time the Congress adjourned last fall, several bills were approved which have a direct impact on older persons.

-----The Equal Credit Opportunity Act Amendments specifies that age cannot be used as a reason for discrimination when applying for credit.

-----The Crime Control Act of 1976 included authorization for grants to states for the development of programs reducing crimes against the elderly.

-----The Housing Authorization Act of 1976 increased the authorized level for Section 202 which provides direct loans for elderly housing programs. It was increased from \$800 million to \$2.5 billion in fiscal year 1977-1978, and to \$3.3 billion in fiscal years 1978-1979 and 1979-1980.

UNWRAPPING THE 95TH CONGRESS

One of the most significant actions of the 95th Congress took place during consideration of the Senate reorganization plan. Under this proposal, the Special Committee on Aging was to be discontinued, and its responsibilities transferred to the Human Resources Committee. However, as a result of legislation which I cosponsored, it was made a permanent committee instead.

Another bill which I cosponsored was the "Meals-on-Wheels Act of 1977." This legislation calls for the expansion of the present meals-on-wheels programs, and channels Federal money into their operation. The intent is to provide home delivered meals to homebound disabled or elderly citizens.

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FOR YOUR INTEREST

As you and I both know, many persons are not ready to retire simply because they reach 65 years of age. On the other hand, some persons at age 65 need home care or assistance of some kind. "Homemakers Upjohn" has started a program to introduce these two groups to each other, in case the one would like full- or part-time employment of this nature.

Called the "second career" program, there are openings for medically trained personnel, as well as nonmedical positions of companions, homemakers, child care specialists, etc. If you would like more information about this program, contact Charlotte Anzalone, R.N., Director of Consumer Affairs, Homemakers Upjohn, 3651 Van Rick Drive, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49002.

And finally, I'm excited to tell you about a new program sponsored through my office. I'm joining several of my colleagues in participating in the Senior Citizen Internship Program which is open to Kansans who are over 60 years of age, and who have an interest in finding out the day-to-day activities of the Senate. There will be meetings with government agencies and departments, committee hearings, and other activities which emphasize programs available for this group of citizens. In addition, the interns will work in my office, and be considered as staff members during their stay.

If you think you might like to participate in this program, please contact my office for more information. You would be paid enough to cover your expenses, and because it's an active schedule, it is necessary for you to be in good health. Arrangements for housing will be made for you.

The internship program is offered during the middle of May, so please let me hear from you soon if you're interested in participating in it.

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OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Bob Dole
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