



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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DOLE CALLS FOR PARTNERSHIP OF GOVERNMENT AND HEALTH-CARE SYSTEM TO SOLVE COST PROBLEM

WASHINGTON -- Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.) asserted today that soaring costs of health care won't be brought fairly and effectively under control by arbitrary decree of the government or anyone else. He said the problem can best be dealt with by a partnership of government and the private health-care system working together.

Dole, who is ranking Republican member of the Senate Finance Committee's Health Subcommittee, addressed a luncheon meeting of the Opticians Association of America at the Washington Hilton Hotel.

The Health Subcommittee has been holding hearings this week on the hospital cost containment problem. The subcommittee chairman, Sen. Herman E. Talmadge (D-Ga.) and Dole, are sponsoring a bill that would employ reimbursement incentives to control costs.

COST CAP UNREALISTIC, UNFAIR

In today's speech to the opticians, Dole described the Carter Administration's proposal for a 9 per cent limit on increases in reimbursable hospital costs under Medicare and Medicaid as unrealistic and unfair. He said hospitals cannot be made to bear the burden by themselves as long as the prices they pay for personnel, supplies, insurance, and compliance with government regulations continue to escalate.

"Contrary to what some people think, a massive dose of federal control won't cure the disease (of rising hospital costs)," Dole declared.

He said that competition and the small businessman must continue to play a vital role in the delivery of health care.

"All too often, government regulation at both the federal and state levels interfere with small businessmen either by directly limiting their ability to compete in the marketplace or by setting up administrative requirements that result in higher costs without improving productivity," Dole continued.

AGAINST CONSUMER PROTECTION AGENCY

The 1976 Republican vice-presidential nominee said he would oppose the bill for a consumer protection agency. He labeled it "an idea whose time has come and gone" because consumer interests are more adequately represented now than they were in the past. "It is illogical for the President to be calling for the creation of yet another federal agency at the same time he is stressing the need for reorganization of the executive branch into a more efficient framework that would reduce and not increase the number of agencies."