



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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EXCERPTS FROM THE STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOB DOLE

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH ACT AND CHILD NUTRITION ACT OF 1966 -- 1977 AMENDMENTS

A provision of this bill which I have particular interest in, one which I introduced in Subcommittee, gives back to the Secretary of Agriculture the authority to regulate the sale of foods sold in competition with school meals.

This authority to regulate is being returned to the Secretary because prior to 1972 the Department of Agriculture, and thus school cafeteria personnel, were responsible for regulating the sale of foods sold in schools participating in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

Both these programs offer students high quality, nutritious meals based on standards set by the Department. My concern, gentlemen, is that too often a student does not reap the full benefits of these nutritious meals. Too often, a student gives up his half dollar and his appetite en route to the cafeteria.

This provision (commonly referred to as the Case/Dole Amendment) seeks to provide some semblance of sanity or guidance to the kinds of foods available for that student to purchase. Is the food being sold going to compete with the well-balanced food items the Child Nutrition programs are providing? Or, is the food being sold going to support and enhance the nutritional benefit of these programs.

PROVISION FOR -- NOT AGAINST

It's important for us to realize that in spite of what many individuals and groups have tried to lead the public to believe about this competitive foods provision, it is not against anything. It is not against vending! It is not against confections! It is not against selling foods in schools for revenue purposes.

The provision is for everything. It is a positive venture. It is for bringing order back into the process of selling foods in schools participating in the federally supported school meals. It is for insuring the sale of foods that support and enhance the nutritional quality of school meals.

A close look at the statistics reveal that last year, during 1976:

- appropriation for all child nutrition programs (\$3.3 billion) amounted to only one-third of the wholesale prices paid out for soft drinks (\$9.4 billion);
- appropriations for school lunch alone (\$580 million) almost equaled the wholesale prices paid for chewing gum (\$576.4 million);
- costs for services from dentists for children under 19 years of age (\$1.5 billion) was about one-half of the wholesale figures manufacturers received for candy that same year (\$2.9 billion).

I would say we need to reassess our priorities, and look closely at preventative health care measures which can be taken in the child feeding programs.