



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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DOLE REQUESTS CARTER CLARIFICATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY POSITION

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Senator Bob Dole today asked President Carter to clarify the Administration's position on withholding payment of full Social Security benefits until a recipient reaches the age of 68. Dole, making reference to a weekend statement by Secretary of Commerce Juanita Kreps, said he does "not believe that this is the correct course to pursue" to save money.

Following is the full text of Dole's letter to Carter:

It was widely reported in the media over the weekend that Secretary of Commerce Juanita Kreps stated that the Carter Administration is discussing the possibility of withholding payments of full Social Security benefits until the recipients reach age 68. I have the highest respect for Secretary Kreps, however, I do not believe that this is the correct course to pursue.

There is little doubt that the Social Security financing system is experiencing financial difficulty. However, the way to solve the problem is not to deprive recipients of their benefits as Secretary Kreps stated. While I agree that raising the age limits would save money, it would do so at the expense of the millions of Americans who are entitled to receive benefits at age 65.

Enough has already been done to undermine the integrity of the Social Security system. I believe that we should take positive steps to reassure Social Security participants and not cast doubts in their minds about benefit eligibility. We must provide for fiscal soundness and insure the receipt of the benefits that have been earned.

I am deeply concerned that a member of the Cabinet would make such a reckless statement. In view of this development, I believe that you should clarify your Administration's position. We cannot afford to have our citizens believe they will be deprived of their benefits.