

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, 1979

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DOLE CAUTIONS AGAINST IMPLEMENTING DRAFT LEGISLATION BLINDLY

WASHINGTON -- Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.) today introduced a bill that, if enacted, would postpone the implementation of the military draft pending completion of Presidential studies and recommendations to Congress. Dole was joined by Sens. William Cohen (R-Maine), George McGovern (D-S.D.) and William Proxmire (D-Wis.).

Dole said the legislation was necessary, adding that "at this point there are too many unanswered questions and limited information to allow us to make an informed decision on this important issue."

The legislation calls upon the President to complete a detailed study of the United States' current registration capabilities, and submit to Congress along with the study recommendations for legislation the President considers necessary to provide an effective draft.

"We have not reached any final decision on registration," Dole said. "But we cannot support any registration proposal based on the limited information and conflicting testimony that has been presented to date. The secretary of defense and the director of the Selective Service System both say they neither need nor want registration at this point. The President has not requested registration. Yet, the Joint Chiefs, Sen. Nunn and others say it is needed. Before we can make a reasoned decision, we need to find out just what the facts are.

"Our bill would direct the President to report to the Armed Services committees of the House and Senate, within 90 days of enactment of this measure, on the nation's manpower needs and mobilization capability."

The report would include:

1. An assessment of the ability of the Selective Service System to meet the military manpower requirements of the United States in the event of national emergency.
2. An evaluation of the current capability of the armed forces of the United States to meet the equipment, clothing, living quarters and training personnel that would be needed in the event of a total or partial mobilization of the armed forces.
3. Such recommendations for legislation as the President considers necessary to provide an effective and equitable military manpower mobilization capability.

"The report required by the bill would provide the kinds of answers that are essential if we are to make an informed decision based on a full understanding of our mobilization needs and the ability of Selective Service and DOD's training base to meet those needs in time of emergency," Dole said. "In addition, the interim period will give us the opportunity to get more detailed Administration testimony on our needs and existing capabilities, and to provide Selective Service with the resources it says it needs to meet DOD's mobilization requirements."