

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE SAYS TIME IS NOW FOR COMMITTEE TO REPORT TAX LEGISLATION

WASHINGTON -- Finance Committee Chairman Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan.), in today's committee mark-up session on the tax package, said, "it is high time for us to report tax legislation."

"Today the Finance Committee begins the decision-making process that should lead to the enactment of major tax legislation in the weeks ahead," he said. "Actually, that process began some time ago: President Reagan announced his economic program in February, and candidate Reagan outlined his basic tax program as long ago as last summer. Last summer this committee considered and reported out tax legislation dealing with many of the issues we are examining this year.

"Now is the time to act. Taxpayers have been kept in suspense long enough. Serious negotiations over the tax cut began in May. Some progress was made, but not enough to warrant further delay. Our tax-writing process began in earnest in May with extensive hearings. Those hearings concluded on May 21, and a strong record has been established on which we can base our judgments. Now it is nearly a month later, and it is high time for us to report tax legislation.

"There are sound policy and practical reasons why we should move as swiftly as possible to get this tax cut on the books. The business community needs some certainty as to what our policy will be over the next few years, so that informed investment decisions can be made. Individuals also need certainty so that they can plan their financial affairs. The sooner we improve the climate for individual savings and investment, the better.

"On the practical side, if action is too long delayed, it will be difficult for the Treasury Department to adjust withholding forms to reflect individual rates effective October 1. I understand the Treasury needs at least four to six weeks to make those changes, so congressional action after August would be too late. I believe the members of this committee agree that we must have some tax relief in 1981, partly as a gesture of good faith to the American taxpayer, and partly to improve the climate for business expansion immediately.

"The groundwork for action has been laid, and I believe a substantial consensus has been achieved on many issues. The President has asked us to complete action before the August recess. I hope that will be done -- I believe it can be done, with a good-faith effort on the part of all the members of both houses. Now we have a chance to show how effective Congress can be in promptly addressing the needs of the nation."