

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE ADDRESSES LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ON CIVIL RIGHTS

CALLS FOR RENEWAL OF VOTING RIGHTS BIPARTISAN

ALLIANCE IN THE 98th CONGRESS

WASHINGTON -- Senator Bob Dole (R.-Kan.) addressed the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights today, urging that organization to "renew the bipartisan alliances which were so crucial in the Voting Rights Act campaign" in order to accomplish certain legislative objectives in the new Congress. Dole was one of four members of Congress asked to address the Conference, a coalition of 160 organizations, during its 33rd annual meeting. The group included the leaders among most major civil rights, labor, and religious organizations, as well as about 40 members of Congress.

The five areas which Dole mentioned as possessing potential for bipartisan alliance and success were:

Jobs: Dole, the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, indicated he would push for swift extension of emergency additional unemployment benefits and examine every possible option for creating jobs.

Fair Housing: Dole reaffirmed his belief that the current Federal Fair Housing law should be amended to provide for an effective enforcement mechanism.

Economic Equity for Women: Dole noted that there were growing concerns in the Congress concerning economic hardships facing women, and indicated that he would, in particular, be pushing for reforms in private pension laws.

Voting Rights for the Handicapped: Dole indicated that it was time to remove not only legal barriers, but physical barriers to the voting process, for the nation's disabled and elderly.

Food Assistance: Dole indicated he plans to introduce legislation that will attempt to channel surplus agricultural commodities to those in genuine need of food. This effort is intended to fill a gap and complement existing nutrition programs.

The Leadership Conference was established in 1950 and has coordinated the lobbying efforts behind most of the major civil rights legislation. Most recently, it obtained overwhelming bipartisan support in its efforts to extend the landmark Voting Rights Act. Dole, who is also a member of the Judiciary Committee, played a pivotal role in moving that legislation through the Senate.

Dole's remarks before the Leadership Conference are attached.