

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE SETS HEARING ON FOOD-TO-THE-NEEDY BILL

WASHINGTON -- Senator Robert Dole (R-Kan.) today announced that a hearing will be held on Tuesday, February 15, on provisions of S. 17, the "Domestic Commodity Distribution and Food Assistance Act." Testimony will be received by the Nutrition Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, which Dole chairs, beginning at 9:30 A.M., in Room-324, Russell Senate Office Building.

The Dole bill would make current large stocks of food commodities owned by the Commodity Credit Corporation available to eligible agencies, including food banks, school lunch and elderly feeding programs, on an as-needed basis, and would defray part of the distribution and processing cost required to get products in useable form to recipients. The Department of Agriculture estimates that over \$1.0 billion in dairy products, corn, wheat, soybeans, rice and honey would be used in the first year at a cost of about \$52 million. The bill would earmark annual savings in storage costs, estimated at \$14 million, for additional processing and distribution of food products to particularly needy individuals.

"Taxpayers are spending millions of dollars every week to store surplus dairy products, grain and other food items while a growing number of Americans are going hungry due to the length and severity of the recession," Dole stated. "These hearings offer an opportunity for representatives of all concerned--food distribution agencies, farm and commodity organizations and processing industries--to comment on my proposed legislation." Dole added that "I intend to move quickly after testimony is received to mark up this bill at the Subcommittee level in order to get action by the full Agriculture Committee by the end of this week.

Dole concluded that "I hope that the Administration will recognize the importance of this proposal and include it in the President's package on recession relief. There may be some cost involved, but the resulting benefits in terms of alleviating hunger clearly outweigh the financial considerations."