

News from Senator

# BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

SH 141 Hart Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1983

CONTACT: WALT RIKER  
(202) 224-6521

DOLE RE-EMPHASIZES NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR DISABILITY RIGHTS --

ITZHAK PERLMAN/DOLE PRESS CONFERENCE FOR HANDICAPPED  
DOMINATED BY WATT CONTROVERSY

WASHINGTON -- Kansas Senator Bob Dole today released the following statement on behalf of the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund. The statement is also included in the Congressional Record:

On Monday, September 26, I had the pleasure of participating in a press conference with the world-famous violinist Itzhak Perlman, to kick-off the Disability Public Awareness Foundation Project, which will be administered by the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund. The purpose of this project is to increase public awareness of the grassroots disability rights and independent living movement and the related organizations created by disabled people who work within the movement. In addition, the project is intended to develop initial financial support for a foundation that will continue public awareness activities and provide support to various organizations run by and for disabled people, which have as their goals promoting leadership development, self-determination and the integration of disabled people into the social, educational and economic mainstream.

This public awareness project includes a benefit concert to be held at the Kennedy Center on October 1, 1984, featuring Mr. Perlman. In addition, there will be a one-hour PBS special concerning disabled people, which will be hosted by Mr. Perlman.

Unfortunately the true purpose of the press conference Monday was overshadowed by the intense media interest in the ongoing saga of Interior Secretary James Watt. As a result, Mr. Perlman and I were questioned almost exclusively on Secretary Watt's recent comments, and his potential fate as a Cabinet member. Therefore, it is important that we not lose sight of the goals of our announced campaign. This project is a matter of great significance to the very real interests of 36 million disabled Americans.

We must continue to do all that is possible to raise public awareness about the handicapped and to promote the noble goals of the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund. I have urged my colleagues to join in this effort.