

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 1985

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DOLE CALLS FOR ACTION ON BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

WASHINGTON -- Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole (R-KS) today called for Senate action by the end of this month on a constitutional amendment that would require the federal government to balance its budget.

"There's been a lot of talk this week about tax reform and that's fine. But there's one reform that's long overdue in this town -- balancing the federal budget," Dole said. "Nearly every state has some kind of mandate for a balanced budget and I can't understand why the federal government shouldn't have the same kind of requirement to bring deficits to a halt. With a \$1.8 trillion debt, \$150 billion annual interest payments on that debt and record-setting deficits every year, it doesn't take much reasoning to see why Congress needs a stiff dose of discipline."

The Amendment would make it much more difficult for Congress to vote for deficits, higher taxes and wasteful spending by calling for a 3/5 vote in both Houses to unbalance the books. Thirty-two states including Kansas have already called for a constitutional convention to draft a balanced budget amendment and if only two more states join that call, a constitutional convention would be a real probability.

"In my view, however, Congress should heed the call and take the initiative on this important issue. It's a bi-partisan concern that has the overwhelming support of the people according to the polls and the mail I get from constituents who can't understand why the government can't balance its books.

"The Senate has already taken the lead in the war on deficits this year by passing a three-year, \$300 billion deficit reduction package," Dole said. "We can demonstrate the same kind of fiscal responsibility by moving on the balanced budget amendment late this month. Battling federal red ink for the past few years has convinced me Congress needs a new tool to deal with runaway federal spending."