

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1985

CONTACT: BRENT BAHLER
202/224-6521

DOLE VOTES SENATE FARM BILL OUT OF COMMITTEE --
AG TICKET STILL NEEDS WORK DOLE SAYS

WASHINGTON -- Kansas Senator Bob Dole late last night helped vote a farm bill out of the Senate Agriculture Committee after many months of debate. The bill, which passed by a 10-6 vote, "still needs a lot of work on the Senate floor and in Conference if we realistically expect President Reagan to sign it into law," Dole said.

According to the Senate Majority Leader, there are two basic problems with the bills passed by both the Senate and the House Agriculture Committees: the cost of these bills are about \$10-15 billion over the limits established in the Congressional Budget Resolution, and both could require mandatory production controls for wheat producers.

"The President has made it very clear that he will veto any bill which includes either large cost overruns or mandatory controls. In other words, if we don't modify the legislation, Congress and farmers will be back to square one," Dole said.

On Thursday, the Senate panel agreed to provisions for the new farm legislation, to become effective for 1986 crops of wheat, feed grains, cotton, rice, and other crops. The bill includes a freeze on target prices at 1985 levels for four years. The wheat loan rate would be reduced to \$3.00 per bushel for 1986, and could be lowered by up to five percent per year afterwards if world prices continue to fall. The difference would be made up by the government in additional income support to farmers.

(MORE)

"There is no disagreement between Congress and the Administration over the need to maintain the present level of farm income support during the current crisis in the farm economy. The question is whether we can find better policies to deal with the problems, rather than continuing to throw more money at them," Dole said. "There are some valuable new ideas in the Senate Agriculture Committee bill. I would particularly mention the acreage conservation reserve, which would bid up to 30 million acres of erosion-prone land out of production for ten years. This will reduce overinflated production bases under the wheat and feed grains programs, in addition to helping out in the conservation area."

"We need to find markets for our products, and that means finding ways to overcome our present competitive disadvantage in the international marketplace. The Senate bill has some good export incentives in it that will help. However, the Administration should be making more active use of its discretionary authority to move this year's bumper harvest to foreign customers," Dole said.

"The Senate should take up the farm bill sometime in the next week or two. If no agreement can be worked out with the White House, Congress could send a "budget-buster" to the President by mid-October. That means we may be back working on a new farm bill as soon as a month from now."