

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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

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CONTACT: BRENT BAHLER
(202) 224-6521

DOLE: FARMERS FIRST, CREDIT SYSTEM LATER

Kansas Sen. Bob Dole has reiterated that Congress should take action on the financially troubled Farm Credit System (FCS) before the end of the year - but only after action on the 1985 Farm Bill is completed.

Speaking to the Iowa press over the weekend, Sen. Dole said, "I am opposed to putting farm credit 'bailout' legislation in the farm bill. We're already late in getting new farm legislation because of unnecessary political delay. My top priority is to let farmers know what the new programs will be. Then we can address the credit problem."

Dole, senior Republican on the Senate agriculture committee, said there would be no federal aid for the nation's leading farm financing agency until a full congressional review is finished.

"We know the farm credit problem is getting worse," said Sen. Dole. "The FCS's third quarter numbers - a reported \$522 million operating loss - show the system is in deep trouble. No one doubts that some form of federal assistance will be needed by the end of the year. We want to be helpful, but we also want to be responsible.

"There's no sense in pouring taxpayers' dollars into a dark hole without first finding out how the FCS got into this mess. That's why I called for next week's special hearings," said Dole. The hearings, to be held by the Senate ag panel, will focus on what assistance is needed.

"I want to put the emphasis on where it belongs, and that's on saving the farmer. Adding a costly credit package to the '85 farm bill would only complicate our efforts to get an acceptable farm program passed by Congress and signed by the President. Whatever we do on the ag bill and farm credit will need strong bipartisan congressional and Administration support," Dole concluded.

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United States Senate

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