

News from Senator

# BOB DOLE



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## DOLE CALLS FOR QUICK ACTION ON PUERTO RICO REFERENDUM BILL

WASHINGTON -- SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE (R-KS.) TODAY WROTE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE ENERGY COMMITTEE URGING QUICK ACTION ON A BILL AUTHORIZING A REFERENDUM ON PUERTO RICAN STATEHOOD.

On May 12, Senator Dole introduced the legislation, which is co-sponsored by Senators D'Amato (R-N.Y.), Moynihan (D-NY.), Simon (D-Ill.) and Spark Matsunaga (D-Hawaii). All five signed the letter to Energy Chairman J. Bennett Johnston (D-La.)

Although Puerto Ricans were granted American citizenship in 1917, they do not have the right to vote in U.S. elections. The letter to Chairman Johnston states: "It is our strong belief that our democratic form of government argues for a referendum by the people of the Commonwealth." The letter concludes by urging the Energy Committee to take "prompt action on S 1182 at the earliest practicable date."

The Dole legislation would provide for a referendum on the question "Should Puerto Rico be admitted into the Union as a state?" The referendum would be held between January 1, 1989 and December 31, 1994, if the governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico requested it. The U.S. would pay for the cost of the referendum, and the governor would inform the President and Congress if the people of Puerto Rico approve it.