

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE, KASSEBAUM BREAK LOGJAM ON SECOND CROP STALEMATE; KANSAS SENATORS WIN 50% THRESHOLD ON DISASTER ACRE PAYMENTS

WASHINGTON -- KANSAS FARMERS FRUSTRATED BY RED TAPE AND UNFAIR PENALTIES ON THE DISASTER RELIEF FRONT GOT SOME GOOD NEWS TODAY WHEN SENATORS BOB DOLE AND NANCY KASSEBAUM WON UNANIMOUS SENATE PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION THAT WILL HELP FIX THE SO-CALLED SECOND CROP AND GHOST ACRES PROBLEMS.

THE DOLE/KASSEBAUM BILL NOW GOES TO THE HOUSE FOR CONSIDERATION. THE SENATORS' PACKAGE PREVENTS A REDUCTION IN DISASTER PAYMENTS TO SECOND CROP PRODUCERS IF THEIR REPLACEMENT CROPS FAILED TO PRODUCE MORE THAN 50% OF THE AVERAGE YIELD OF THEIR COUNTY -- CROP YIELD ABOVE THAT THRESHOLD WOULD BE SUBJECT TO A 75% REDUCTION OF THE GROSS VALUE OF THE SECOND CROP.

THE PACKAGE ALSO INCLUDES A SO-CALLED EQUAL ACRE OFFSET -- THAT MEANS THE DEDUCTION ON THE REPLANTED ACREAGE WOULD ONLY COUNT AGAINST DISASTER PAYMENTS FROM THE SAME ACREAGE, NOT GROSS DISASTER PAYMENTS.

"THIS IS A FAIRNESS ISSUE. I HAVE BEEN REMINDING MY SENATE COLLEAGUES OF THIS ONGOING NIGHTMARE FOR FARMERS WHO WERE HIT HARD BY THIS YEAR'S DROUGHT," DOLE SAID. "FARMERS WHO WERE WIPED OUT SHOULDN'T BE PENALIZED ON THE RELIEF FRONT JUST BECAUSE THEY TRIED TO RAISE A SECOND CROP ON THEIR DISASTER ACRES.

"I AM PLEASED WE FINALLY HAVE PASSED LEGISLATION TO CORRECT WHAT FOR MANY FARMERS HAS BEEN A SERIOUS PROBLEM." SENATOR KASSEBAUM SAID. "THROUGH SENATOR DOLE'S PERSISTENCE WE HAVE TAKEN A STEP TO SEE THAT FARMERS WHO SUFFERED A CROP DISASTER THIS YEAR ARE TREATED FAIRLY. I HOPE AND EXPECT THAT THE HOUSE WILL AGREE TO THIS AND ACT PROMPTLY," SHE CONCLUDED.

"THERE HAS BEEN PLENTY OF ATTENTION LATELY ON NATURAL DISASTERS, WHAT WITH THE TRAGEDIES IN SOUTH CAROLINA AND CALIFORNIA. NOW, I AM NOT EQUATING THE SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE AND HURRICANE HUGO WITH THE DROUGHT OF 1989, BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE, THOUSANDS OF FARMERS LOST THEIR CROPS THIS YEAR TO RECORD HEAT, INTENSE WIND AND HAIL, AN EARLY FREEZE, AND TORRENTIAL RAINS. THE DAMAGE RUNS IN THE BILLIONS OF DOLLARS.

"SO WHILE WE CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS TO HELP THE LATEST VICTIMS OF NATURAL DISASTERS, WE CAN'T FORGET OUR FARMERS.

"BY PASSING A RESPONSIBLE SECOND CROP BILL TODAY, AND SENDING IT TO THE HOUSE, WE ARE CLOSER TO FINISHING THE JOB WE SET OUT TO DO FOR DROUGHT-PLAGUED FARMERS ALL ACROSS AMERICA WHO ARE SIMPLY WAITING FOR HELP -- AND FAIR PLAY," DOLE SAID.

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