

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE INTRODUCES DROUGHT RELIEF PACKAGE FOR WINTER WHEAT FARMERS;
EXTEND 1988 DROUGHT ACT -- SAVINGS ON DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS TO
PAY FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE, NEUTRALIZE BUDGET IMPACT
USDA LETTER TO DOLE PEGS 1989 WHEAT CROP AT 2 BILLION BUSHELS

WASHINGTON -- THE UNITED STATES SENATE TODAY UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION INTRODUCED BY KANSAS SENATORS BOB DOLE AND NANCY KASSEBAUM TO EXTEND THE 1988 DISASTER ASSISTANCE ACT TO INCLUDE WINTER WHEAT PRODUCERS FACING SEVERE LOSSES ON THEIR 1989 CROP.

THE NON-BINDING RELIEF MEASURE CAME IN THE FORM OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE 1989 BUDGET RESOLUTION NOW UNDER SENATE CONSIDERATION. THE PLAN EXTENDS THE SAME KIND OF DISASTER ASSISTANCE AS PROVIDED UNDER LAST YEAR'S DROUGHT RELIEF ACT TO THIS YEAR'S DROUGHT-PLAGUED WINTER WHEAT CROP.

"WE'VE HELPED GET SOME STOPGAP RELIEF, BUT IT'S CLEAR OUR WHEAT FARMERS ARE GOING TO NEED A LIFE PRESERVER," DOLE SAID. "THERE ARE NO MIRACLES LEFT, ONLY A HELPING HAND FROM WASHINGTON. IT IS MY HOPE THAT THIS STRONG SIGNAL FROM THE SENATE WILL BE THE CATALYST FOR A CONGRESSIONAL RELIEF PACKAGE BY MID-SUMMER.

"SECRETARY YEUTTER HAS DONE EVERYTHING UNDER HIS AUTHORITY, BUT IT IS CLEAR THAT ADDITIONAL LEGISLATION IS NOW NECESSARY," KASSEBAUM SAID. "I AM PLEASED WE WERE ABLE TO MOVE QUICKLY ON THIS ISSUE."

ACCORDING TO DOLE, AS MARKET PRICES RISE DUE TO THE LIMITED 1989 CROP, THERE WILL BE LITTLE OR NO DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS MADE THIS YEAR. THEREFORE, THE SAVINGS FROM THIS PROGRAM CAN BE APPLIED TO DISASTER RELIEF.

"WITH \$1 BILLION ALREADY TARGETED FOR WHEAT PRODUCERS IN THIS YEAR'S BUDGET, AND AN ESTIMATED \$250 TO \$350 MILLION NEEDED TO ASSIST DROUGHT-WRACKED FARMERS, IF WE ACT SOON ENOUGH IT IS POSSIBLE WE COULD SEE BOTH EMERGENCY AID FOR FARMERS AND SAVINGS FOR TAXPAYERS," DOLE SAID.

MEANWHILE, IN RESPONSE TO REQUESTS FROM SENATOR DOLE FOR COST ESTIMATES OF POSSIBLE RELIEF MEASURES, SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE CLAYTON YEUTTER SAID IN A LETTER TO THE KANSAS REPUBLICAN THAT THE 1989 WHEAT CROP WILL BE APPROXIMATELY 2 TO 2.2 BILLION BUSHELS.