

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MAY 24, 1989

CONTACT: WALT RIKER
(202) 224-5358

DOLE PREDICTS PASSAGE OF "REASONABLE" DROUGHT RELIEF PACKAGE;
VISITS WITH YEUTTER ON LEGISLATION; MEANWHILE, CROP INSURANCE
REQUIREMENTS SEEM CERTAIN NEXT YEAR.

WASHINGTON -- SAYING THAT DROUGHT RELIEF "SHOULD NOT BE A RACE TO SEE WHO CAN SPEND THE MOST MONEY", SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE (R-KS) TODAY PREDICTED A "REASONABLE" DROUGHT RELIEF PACKAGE TARGETED TO "DESERVING FARMERS AND RANCHERS" WILL BE SIGNED INTO LAW THIS YEAR.

DOLE MADE THE PREDICTION AFTER TALKING BY TELEPHONE WITH SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE CLAYTON YEUTTER.

"WHILE THE SECRETARY MADE NO COMMITMENTS, HE INDICATED HE IS WILLING TO DO THE RIGHT THING. HE KNOWS HOW BAD CONDITIONS ARE IN KANSAS AND OTHER GREAT PLAINS STATES AND HE UNDERSTANDS A HELPING HAND WILL BE NEEDED," DOLE SAID. "NEVERTHELESS, WE ARE IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT. IF WE'RE GOING TO BE SUCCESSFUL, DROUGHT RELIEF MUST BE CAREFULLY TARGETED TO THE TRULY NEEDY. WE AREN'T GOING TO MAKE UP FOR THE LACK OF RAIN WITH A SUDDEN DOWNPOUR OF TAXPAYER DOLLARS."

DOLE, ALONG WITH SENATOR NANCY KASSEBAUM AND ELEVEN OTHER SENATORS FROM STATES HIT HARD BY THE WINTER AND SPRING-LONG DROUGHT, HAVE INTRODUCED LEGISLATION TO EXTEND THE 1988 DISASTER ASSISTANCE ACT TO CROPS PLANTED IN 1988 FOR HARVEST IN 1989, PRIMARILY WINTER WHEAT.

"SOME OF THE PROPOSALS FLOATING AROUND THESE DAYS ARE JUST TOO MUCH," DOLE SAID. "THESE BILLS ARE LOADED WITH ALL KINDS OF COSTLY GOODIES, INCLUDING COVERAGE FOR CROPS JUST PLANTED AND MONTHS AWAY FROM HARVEST. THIS ISN'T A RACE TO SPEND THE MOST MONEY."

DOLE ALSO WARNED THAT DROUGHT RELIEF THIS TIME AROUND COULD WELL SIGNAL THE END OF FEDERAL ASSISTANCE ON A CASE-BY-CASE, AD HOC BASIS. IN THE FUTURE, DOLE PREDICTED SOME TYPE OF UNIFORM CROP INSURANCE PROGRAM WILL BE REQUIRED FOR PRODUCERS WHO WANT TO BE PROTECTED FROM THE RAVAGES OF MOTHER NATURE.

"WE HAVE TO FIND AN ATTRACTIVE AND MORE COST-EFFECTIVE WAY TO DEAL WITH WIDE-SPREAD CROP LOSSES," DOLE SAID. "RIGHT NOW, THE FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE PROGRAM IS A DISASTER ITSELF, REELING FROM THE LONGTERM EFFECTS OF HIGH PREMIUMS, LOW PARTICIPATION, COMPLEX RED-TAPE, CASES OF MISMANAGEMENT, AND, IN SOME CASES, OUTRIGHT FRAUD. WITH REFORMS ON THE WAY, IT IS MY HOPE THAT THE INTEGRITY AND FINANCIAL SOUNDNESS OF THE PROGRAM CAN BE RESTORED AND THAT AN IMPROVED PLAN WILL BE AVAILABLE TO REPLACE COSTLY FEDERAL BAIL-OUTS."

#