

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE CONFIDENT PRESIDENT WILL SIGN "SECOND CROP" RELIEF BILL;
KASSEBAUM/DOLE PACKAGE CLEARS HOUSE AND SENATE THURSDAY;
50% THRESHOLD ON ITS WAY TO THE WHITE HOUSE FOR BUSH SIGNATURE.

WASHINGTON -- SAYING HE WAS "CONFIDENT PRESIDENT BUSH WILL SIGN OUR BILL", KANSAS SENATOR BOB DOLE TODAY HAILED CONGRESSIONAL PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION THAT WILL FIX SECOND CROP AND "GHOST ACRES" PROBLEMS PLAGUING DROUGHT-WRACKED FARMERS.

THE DOLE/KASSEBAUM PACKAGE WAS OKAYED BY THE SENATE WEDNESDAY, CLEARED BY THE HOUSE THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND GIVEN UNANIMOUS FINAL PASSAGE BY THE SENATE LATE TONIGHT. THE BILL NOW HEADS TO THE OVAL OFFICE FOR THE PRESIDENT'S SIGNATURE.

"WITH HALLOWEEN RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER, THIS IS ONE 'GHOST' STORY THAT WON'T SCARE ANYONE ANYMORE," DOLE SAID. "FARMERS HAD A LEGITIMATE GRIPE THAT PRODUCERS WHO MOVED QUICKLY TO PLANT A SECOND CROP ON FAILED ACRES SHOULDN'T BE PENALIZED WHEN IT CAME TIME TO QUALIFY FOR FEDERAL DISASTER AID.

"KANSAS FARMERS DON'T NEED ANY HALLOWEEN TRICKS FROM THE GOVERNMENT -- THE DROUGHT WAS BAD ENOUGH. THANKS TO GOOD COOPERATION ALL ACROSS OUR KANSAS DELEGATION ON CAPITOL HILL, RELIEF WILL SOON BE ON ITS WAY," DOLE ADDED.

THE DOLE-KASSEBAUM BILL GUARANTEES THAT DISASTER PAYMENTS TO SECOND CROP PRODUCERS WILL NOT BE REDUCED 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 WILL ALSO INCLUDE 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.

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The buildings to be transferred are Custer Hill Elementary, Fort Riley Elementary, Jefferson Elementary, Morris Hill Elementary, Ware Elementary and Fort Riley Junior High School.

The \$5.2 million in federal funds will pay for a wide range of improvements, led by new classroom construction and library improvements. Also included are overall electrical system checks, roof repairs, kitchen repairs and improvements, heating/air conditioning repairs or replacements, and handicapped access construction.

Fort Riley Junior High will undergo the most substantial changes. Sixteen classrooms housed in seven temporary buildings will be removed and replaced with a new building. Installation of air conditioning; construction of foreign language, communications, drama/speech and four math classrooms is also slated. A physical education center will be added.

Geary County has sought since 1969 to make substantial improvements at the Junior High. The logjam was broken when the Defense Department's Office of Economic Adjustment and the Department of Education, at the behest of Senator Dole, prepared an analysis of the schools at Fort Riley and found their facility requirements of "an emergency or serious nature." Noting the state and local school district lacked the funds for the improvements, the study recommended, "that the U.S. Department of Education budget for these facility requirements at the earliest possible date."

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