

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JUNE 18, 1991

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INTERSTATE TRASH DUMPING

WASHINGTON -- SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE (R-KANSAS) TODAY SUBMITTED TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ON A DOLE-BACKED BILL TO HELP STATES SUCH AS KANSAS REGULATE OR BAN THE DUMPING OF OUT-OF-STATE WASTE WITHIN THEIR BORDERS.

TO STATE THE OBVIOUS, INTERSTATE DUMPING OF TRASH IS AN ENORMOUS PROBLEM. AFTER A COUPLE OF ATTEMPTS WHICH I STRONGLY SUPPORTED LAST YEAR TO DEAL WITH THIS ISSUE IN THE SENATE, I AM HEARTENED BY THE FACT THAT MANY MORE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ARE BEGINNING TO PAY ATTENTION TO THIS IMPORTANT MATTER. THE LONGER WE AVOID DEALING WITH THIS ISSUE, THE GREATER THE HARDSHIP FOR MANY OF OUR STATES, THEIR COMMUNITIES, AND THEIR CITIZENS.

ON A NATIONAL LEVEL, THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY ESTIMATES THAT AMERICANS GENERATE ABOUT 4 POUNDS OF TRASH PER PERSON DAILY -- OR ABOUT 180 MILLION TONS OF TRASH A YEAR. SUCH AMOUNTS ARE PROJECTED TO MOVE IN ONLY ONE DIRECTION -- UP -- REACHING AS MUCH AS 216 MILLION TONS PER YEAR BY THE YEAR 2000.

WITH 80 PERCENT OF SUCH WASTE BEING DISPOSED OF IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC LANDFILLS, IT IS NO WONDER THAT LANDFILLS ARE BEING FILLED UP AT AN ALARMING RATE. INDEED, IN 1960, THERE WERE ROUGHLY 30,000 LANDFILLS IN THE U.S.; BY 1986, THIS NUMBER HAD FALLEN TO JUST 6,000 LANDFILLS. THESE STATISTICS BECOME EVEN MORE STARTLING WHEN CONSIDERED IN THE CONTEXT OF A RECENT REPORT BY THE U.S. OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT IN WHICH IT WAS ESTIMATED THAT 80 PERCENT OF CURRENT LANDFILLS WILL REACH CAPACITY AND CLOSE WITHIN THE NEXT 20 YEARS.

THE INESCAPABLE RESULT OF THIS SITUATION IS THAT SOME STATES ARE BECOMING DUMPING GROUNDS FOR OTHER STATES THAT HAVE NOT ADEQUATELY ASSUMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THEIR OWN GARBAGE.

EAST COAST TRASH EXPORTS TO KANSAS

KANSAS IS ONE OF A NUMBER OF MIDWESTERN STATES THAT IS BEGINNING TO FIND OUT-OF-STATE TRASH ON ITS DOORSTEP.

INDEED, I WAS TOLD JUST YESTERDAY BY THE KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT (KDHE) THAT THE LAST FEW WEEKS HAVE WITNESSED AN INCREASE IN SHIPMENTS -- WHICH ONLY RECENTLY STARTED -- OF TRASH ORIGINATING FROM NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY.

LAST WEEK, KDHE ISSUED AN ORDER TO STOP THE DUMPING OF TRASH IN THE MCPHERSON CITY LANDFILL UNTIL ITS OWNER STARTS COMPLYING WITH THE DUMPING LAWS. I MIGHT ADD THAT THE OWNER OF THE LANDFILL IS A NEW JERSEY COMPANY AND THAT AT LEAST SOME OF THE TRASH BEING DUMPED IS FROM OUT-OF-STATE.

I KNOW THAT AT LEAST TWO OTHER COMMUNITIES IN KANSAS HAVE OR ARE FACING SIMILAR DECISIONS INVOLVING THE IMPORTATION OF TRASH FROM OTHER STATES.

LEGISLATIVE RELIEF FOR STATES

THE SOLUTION TO THIS EXTREMELY CRITICAL PROBLEM LIES IN LEGISLATION TARGETED AT BOTH THE STATE AND NATIONAL LEVELS. IN THIS CONNECTION, I AM PROUD TO HAVE BEEN AN ORIGINAL COSPONSOR OF S. 153, WHICH WAS INTRODUCED BY THE DISTINGUISHED SENATOR FROM INDIANA, SENATOR COATS, AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 102ND CONGRESS.

THIS BILL PROVIDES IMMEDIATE RELIEF TO THE STATES BY GIVING THEM REGULATORY AUTHORITY TO IMPOSE DISPOSAL FEES ON OUT-OF-STATE TRASH, INCLUDING FEES WHICH DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN TRASH ORIGINATING FROM DIFFERENT STATES.

GIVE STATES FREEDOM TO MANAGE, BAN, OUT-OF-STATE GARBAGE

SECOND, THIS BILL PROMOTES A LONG-RANGE SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM BY ENCOURAGING STATES TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT 20 YEAR SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLANS. IN CONNECTION WITH THE ADOPTION OF SUCH PLANS, STATES WOULD BE AUTHORIZED TO BAN THE DUMPING OF OUT-OF-STATE TRASH WITHIN THEIR BORDERS.

IN MY OPINION, THIS BILL IS PRO-STATE, PRO-CHOICE, AND PRO-ENVIRONMENT. IT IS A FORWARD-LOOKING BILL THAT GIVES STATES THE FREEDOM-TO-CHOOSE HOW TO DEAL WITH THEIR TRASH PROBLEMS, WHILE ENCOURAGING A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT.

I HOPE THAT THIS DISTINGUISHED SUBCOMMITTEE WILL CAREFULLY CONSIDER THIS LEGISLATION AND THAT THE FULL SENATE WILL TAKE IT UP FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

MANY OF OUR STATES CAN NOT WAIT MUCH LONGER FOR HELP WHICH CAN ONLY COME FROM CONGRESS.

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