

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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154 TORNADO SIRENS FOR KANSAS

**91 TOWNS IN 34 COUNTIES IN LINE FOR BRAND NEW WARNING EQUIPMENT;
DOLE PLAN WINS SENATE APPROVAL FOR THE \$1.15 MILLION REQUEST**

WASHINGTON -- Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole (R-Kansas) today announced that the U.S. Senate has approved his \$1.15 million request to help 91 Kansas communities in 34 counties purchase 154 new tornado warning sirens, including two for tornado-ravaged Andover.

Dole's Kansas siren amendment was approved late Thursday as part of the Senate's VA, HUD and Independent Agencies appropriations bill. It now heads to a joint Senate-House conference committee for further consideration.

Brand New, Not Surplus Equipment

In the midst of one of the state's most violent tornado seasons, Dole secured 152 surplus sirens for Kansas last Spring on an emergency basis. But when informed this month by officials of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that many of the surplus sirens were in poor condition and might be unreliable in the event of severe weather, Dole made the funding request for the brand new warning sirens.

"The old saying, everybody talks about the weather but never does anything about it can't be the final word when our communities stand defenseless against the kind of awesome destruction our state experienced this year," Dole said. "When it comes to life-threatening weather, we can't afford to talk, we have to act. When we found out the surplus equipment might be unreliable or too costly to repair, I went to FEMA and to my Senate colleagues to make certain this priority project got funding and Senate approval."

State Determines Need for Sirens in 91 Kansas Communities

91 Kansas communities in 34 counties will be able to take advantage of the federal matching dollars made available under Dole's amendment to obtain new tornado warning sirens from FEMA.

State officials determine which Kansas communities need the new equipment and they have compiled the attached list of towns and the number of sirens allotted to each.

Communities with populations less than 5,000 persons will be able to obtain the sirens under a 75/25 percent federal/local cost sharing arrangement. Communities with populations more than 5,000 persons will qualify under a 50/50 cost sharing agreement. The sirens are estimated to cost approximately \$7,500 apiece (including purchase price, transportation and installation).

New Sirens for Andover

In addition, Dole's request included money for two new sirens for Andover, which currently has two sirens on loan from Coffey County. Dole secured the temporary Andover sirens after the town's siren failed to operate during the devastating tornado of April 26th.

"The federal government and the state of Kansas may not be able to stop tornadoes, but we can target limited resources to protect lives, bringing needed severe weather protection to thousands of Kansans, many in towns with no early warning system whatsoever," Dole added. "Anyone who lives in Kansas knows that every second counts when severe weather is rolling across our state. The piercing wail of a siren may make the difference between life and death."

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