

**Bob Dole**



**NEWS**

**U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS**

**FROM:**

**SENATE MAJORITY LEADER**

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## **CRIME BILL**

### **HOUSE PASSAGE LEAVES SENATE TO FINISH JOB; CLINTON VETO-THREAT POSES FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION: WHO KNOWS BEST HOW TO FIGHT CRIME?**

I want to commend the House of Representatives for completing action on one of the key elements in the Contract with America-- "The Taking Back Our Streets Act." As a result of yesterday's vote, we are now one step closer to enacting the kind of tough-on-crime legislation the American people deserve:

#### **Tough-On-Crime Legislation**

- Mandatory restitution for the victims of federal crimes.
- The swift deportation of illegal aliens who have broken our criminal laws.
- More funds for prison construction so that governors like George Allen can abolish parole and make truth-in-sentencing a reality in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- Comprehensive reform of the habeas corpus rules to prevent convicted criminals from exploiting the system, with more frivolous appeals, more unnecessary delays, and yes, more grief for the victims of crime and their families.
- Reform of the exclusionary rule to ensure that relevant evidence is not tossed out at trial simply because a police officer made an honest mistake.
- And, finally, a rewrite of last year's police-hiring program to give states and localities more flexibility in determining what best suits their own unique law enforcement needs. Is it more cops? Or is it more squad cars? Better technology? Training? Perhaps even computers?

Unfortunately, this last provision has raised president Clinton's political hackles. He is now out on the stump, threatening a veto, and arguing that the law-enforcement block grants will somehow jeopardize his pledge to put 100,000 more cops on the street.

Of course, last year's crime bill was one of the most politically-oversold pieces of legislation in recent memory. As most experts will tell you, the 1994 crime bill barely contains enough funding to hire 25,000 more cops, never mind 100,000. So, President Clinton's complaints may make for good rhetoric, but when all is said and done, rhetoric has never put a single cop on the beat.

#### **Block Grants Provide Necessary Flexibility**

The President's veto-threat also raises a more fundamental question: Who knows best how to fight crime? Is it Congress? The bureaucrats in Washington? Or is it the people on the front-lines: the sheriffs, the mayors, the county commissioners, the governors? Doesn't President Clinton trust our state and local officials to make the right decisions...To do the right thing...Or does he think they can't be trusted and that, if given the flexibility, they will somehow squander the block-grant funds?

As the Washington Post editorialized yesterday, and I quote: "'One hundred thousand cops' sounds good, but congressional failure to include that mandate is not worth a presidential veto....The world won't end if local authorities are given more flexibility."

So, I commend the House of Representatives for toughening up last year's crime bill and giving the states and cities the flexibility they need. It's now up to the Senate to finish the job.

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