

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

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DOLE COMMENDS ZELIFF FOR HEARINGS ON NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY

WASHINGTON - Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole today gave the following remarks on the floor of the U.S. Senate:

Congressman Bill Zeliff has just held two days of outstanding hearings on the President's National Drug Control Strategy. I think those hearings were very important, and the American people ought to know what Congressman Zeliff and his National Security Subcommittee discovered.

You may remember that it was Bill Zeliff who invited Nancy Reagan and a number of other drug experts from around the country to testify in March of this year, and who held an all-day hearing in April with Dr. Lee Brown, the White House drug czar.

Mrs. Reagan testified that we have to get back on track, and she was right. The fact is that drug use fell each year of the Reagan administration, and up until 1992, it continued to fall. For example, monthly cocaine use dropped from 2.9 million users in 1988 to 1.3 million in 1992. Overall drug use dropped from 22.3 million users in 1985 to 11.4 million users in 1992.

But, as Congressman Zeliff's hearings highlighted, drug use since 1993 has been steadily rising. A 1994 survey of 51,000 kids showed use of LSD, non-LSD hallucinogens, stimulants, and marijuana all up. Cocaine street prices continue to fall, while cocaine emergency room admissions are at historically high levels. In 1994, twice the number of 8th graders were experimenting with marijuana than in 1991, and daily use by seniors was up 50% between December 1993 and December 1994.

During his hearings, Congressman Zeliff also turned up these disturbing facts:

First, the head of D.E.A., Administrator Constantine, admitted that exploding drug use in this country and international drug cartels should be seen as our "number-one" national security threat. Administrator Constantine also admitted that rising casual drug use among U.S. kids is a "timebomb" waiting to explode.

Second, the President's interdiction coordinator, Admiral Kramek, admitted that his office, which is supposed to coordinate the whole nation's drug interdiction effort, has just six full-time employees--and that the administration's interdiction effort has been cut for three straight years.

Third, officials at the D.E.A., the president's interdiction coordinator, and the head of U.S. customs all suggest that President Clinton's drug strategy is not fulfilling stated expectations.

Fourth, the General Accounting Office has released a report confirming that the administration's anti-drug strategy in the source countries is badly managed, poorly coordinated among agencies, and holds low priority in key embassies, including the U.S. Embassy in Mexico--despite the fact that 70 percent of the cocaine coming into the U.S. comes over the border with Mexico.

I want to commend Chairman Zeliff for convening these important hearings. The hearings are a wake-up call to all of us in Congress that we must regain the offensive and renew our commitment to the war on drugs.

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