

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Clarkson Hine
(202) 224-5358

LOBBYING REFORM

STATEMENT OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB DOLE

Earlier this year, Congress took an important step forward in reforming the way we conduct the nation's business by passing Congressional-coverage legislation. Now, we will think twice before imposing new regulatory burdens on the private sector because these burdens will be imposed on Congress, too.

Today, we will pass another key element of the reform agenda--lobbying reform.

Unlike last year's bill, this legislation strikes the right balance: it tightens up the registration and disclosure requirements for the Washington-based lobbyists, without infringing upon the rights of ordinary citizens at the grassroots to petition their government. This was the main bone of contention during last year's debate, and I believe we have resolved our disagreements. While I was hopeful that we could have made a number of additional changes, including codifying President Clinton's Executive Order which imposes a five-year ban on post-employment lobbying by executive branch officials, I am nonetheless pleased that the bill includes my amendment restricting the post-employment activities of our nation's top trade negotiators.

This amendment will prohibit anyone who has served as U.S. Trade Representative or Deputy U.S. Trade Representative, from ever representing, aiding, or advising any foreign government, foreign political party, or foreign business entity with the intent to influence a decision of any officer or employee of an executive agency.

Current law prohibits the U.S. Trade Representative from aiding or advising a foreign entity for a period of three years after his service has ended. My amendment transforms this 3-year ban into a lifetime ban and applies the ban to the Deputy Trade Representative as well.

The real problem here is one of appearance...the appearance of a revolving door between government service and private-sector enrichment. This appearance problem becomes all the more acute when former high-government officials work on behalf of foreign interests.

Service as a high government official is a privilege, not a right. This amendment may discourage some individuals from accepting the U.S.T.R. job, but in my view, this is a small price to pay when the confidence of the American people is at stake.

Finally, I want to congratulate my distinguished colleagues, Senators Levin, Cohen, McConnell, and Lott, for all the hard work they have put into this effort. The bill they have crafted is sensible and clear, and should go a long way to help restore the trust of the American people in their elected representatives.

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* Remarks delivered on Senate floor, approximately 11:50 p.m.