

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HUMANITARIAN AID CORRIDOR ACT

**DOLE-SIMON AMENDMENT PROHIBITS U.S. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE
TO COUNTRIES THAT BLOCK HUMANITARIAN AID;
MAXIMIZES FEDERAL BUDGET EFFICIENCY & SAVES TAXPAYER DOLLARS**

I rise today to thank my colleagues Senators Simon, Helms, Hatfield, D'Amato, Feinstein, Coverdell, Gregg, and Moseley-Braun for their support of the Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act. The amendment that the distinguished Senator from Illinois, Senator Simon and I are offering, is clear and precise. The strong, bipartisan bill furthers an important American foreign policy objective: to facilitate the prompt delivery of humanitarian aid. The amendment, which overwhelmingly passed the House, prohibits U.S. foreign assistance to countries that impede or prohibit the delivery or transport of U.S. humanitarian assistance to other countries. This legislation also recognizes that there may be a compelling U.S. national security interest which would override the principle of noninterference with humanitarian aid. For this reason, U.S. foreign aid to nations in violation of this Act may be continued if the President determines that such assistance is in the national security interest of the United States. Let me say that this bill does not single out or exempt any one country. All nations are held to one standard. The intent is simple, to ensure that American humanitarian aid can be delivered where it is needed, when it is needed.

Currently there is one country that is clearly affected by this legislation. Turkey, a valuable ally in NATO and in Operation Desert Storm, continues to receive a large amount of assistance in the form of grants and concessional loans financed by the American taxpayer. At the same time, however, they continue to enforce an immoral blockade on Armenia. September 21 marks the fourth anniversary of Armenia's independence from the Soviet Union. We as Americans welcomed their independence and through our humanitarian efforts strived to help this fledgling democracy grow and prosper. Their road has not been an easy one, but the United States has been willing to provide the assistance they need. The delivery of humanitarian assistance to aid those in need, is consistent with the fundamental values of our nation. This legislation will strengthen our ability to deliver such assistance which, as I stated before, is an important component of our foreign policy.

Let me conclude by saying that it does not make sense to offer U.S. taxpayer dollars unconditionally to countries that hinder our humanitarian relief efforts. In light of budgetary constraints, it is imperative that U.S. relief efforts be timely and efficient. The federal budget deficit and spending constraints require maximum efficiency in the usage of the United States foreign assistance. No doubt about it, countries that prevent the delivery of such assistance, or intentionally increase the cost of delivery of such assistance, do not deserve unrestricted American assistance. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment not out of partisan politics, but out of the belief in the fundamental values that this nation is built on.

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