

BD. affirmative action sent 5/29

Senator Dole's Record on Civil Rights/Affirmative Action

Senator Dole has a strong record on civil rights. As a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, he voted for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Senator Dole has also been a leading advocate of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition, Senator Dole was instrumental in extending the Voting Rights Act in 1982 and in brokering the compromise leading to the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1991.

In light of this strong record, there is perhaps no one in Congress today who is more uniquely qualified to conduct a serious re-evaluation of federal affirmative action programs and policies.

Senator Dole has been actively engaged in the re-evaluation effort for some time now. In May 1994, Senator Dole gave a floor statement commemorating the 40th anniversary of the landmark Brown versus Board of Education decision. In this statement, Senator Dole suggested the need for a new civil rights agenda-- one that moves away from the traditional focus on "legal rights" towards a new focus on other "civil rights" issues like personal safety and quality education.

Congressional Research Service. In December 1994, Senator Dole asked the Congressional Research Service to compile a list of every federal law and regulation that grants a preference to individuals on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, and gender. In February 1995, the CRS responded with a list of more than 160 items.

Request for Hearings. After receiving the CRS report in February 1995, Senator Dole wrote to Senator Bond requesting that the Senate Small Business Committee hold hearings on the SBA's section 8(a) program. Senator Dole has also written to Senator Kassebaum requesting that the Senate Labor Committee hold hearings on Executive Order 11246.

Legislation. Senator Dole has recently indicated that he will introduce legislation ~~later~~ this year that will prohibit the federal government from granting group preferences.

In a recent floor statement (March 17, 1995), Senator Dole summarized his position on affirmative action this way: "If affirmative action means remedying proven past discrimination against individuals, then I'm all for it. If affirmative action means recruitment of qualified minorities and women to give them an opportunity to compete, without guaranteeing the results of the competition, then I'm for that too. But if affirmative action means quotas, set-asides, and other preferences that favor individuals simply because they happen to belong to certain groups, then that's where I draw the line."