

SENATOR BOB DOLE  
REMARKS  
NATIONAL BROKERS COMMUNICATION CONGRESS  
SEPTEMBER 25, 1991

\*It's a real privilege to be here this morning, and to lend my support to the Easy Access Housing Campaign.

\*Century 21 and National Easter Seals Society should take great pride in their commitment to this very meaningful program.

\*Robin and I have long been inspired by the state motto of Kansas--"To the stars through difficulties."

\*By increasing public awareness of the need for barrier-free housing, you will be helping millions of Americans to reach their stars.

\*One of the most rewarding moments of my political career occurred July 26, 1990 when President Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act, prohibiting discrimination against persons with disabilities.

\*Seventy percent of all Americans will, at some time in their lives have a temporary or permanent disability. Whether as a result of aging or an accident, accessible-free housing is a major concern for millions of Americans.

\*Unfortunately, disability knows no boundaries -- therefore it is essential that we recognize the obstacles our friends and family members face on a daily basis. Stairs, narrow doorways, and lack of maneuvering room can render a home completely inaccessible.

\*It is essential to heighten public awareness about environmental and structural barriers that prevent our neighbors from enjoying active lives in their own homes.

\*The private and public sectors both play an important role in promoting the full integration of people with disabilities. Programs initiated by the private sector such as "Easy Access Housing for Easier Living" have and will bring about the needed awareness and changes for accessible housing.

\*Building a barrier free society from the start is cost effective in the long run and more importantly, brings dignity to the lives of those who will benefit from greater access and integration in their homes and communities.

\*Another important aim of ADA is to open doors of employment previously closed to qualified individuals with disabilities.

\*Every vocational rehabilitation study and years of experience show that persons with disabilities are highly reliable and productive employees. Yet, the unemployment rate for this group is among the highest in the nation.

\*All too often, misconceptions about the abilities of persons with disabilities deny many the opportunity to work. These misconceptions are costly not only to business, but to each of us, by keeping otherwise capable workers dependent on federal financial assistance.

\*America must break this cycle of dependency with enlightened policies promoting self-determination. Work enables people to participate in the economy as active consumers, purchasing the goods and services they need and desire.

\*All Americans benefit from a workforce based on inclusion, and not exclusion.

\*In the short term, businesses will have to spend money to accommodate employees or customers with disabilities...But as you are showing through your campaign, these accommodations can be accomplished easily and at minimal cost.

\*Legislation was also added to ADA which expands technical assistance programs to ensure the availability of information and expertise on how to make accommodations...and we created a \$5,000 tax credit to help defray costs of structural changes or other accommodations.

\*My own interest in expanding employment opportunities for individuals led to the establishment of the Dole Foundation.

\*The mission of the foundation is to increase the economic independence of persons with disabilities through employment and training programs.

\*Just as the opportunity to make a living is so critical to persons with disabilities so, too, is the opportunity for every individual to enjoy active lives in their own home.

\*That's why your program is so important, and that's why I was proud to join with Majority Leader Mitchell as well as Republican Leader Michel and Rep. Steny Hoyer in the House in sponsoring legislation to proclaim November as National Accessible Housing Month."

\*When you go to your meetings to discuss issues with your Representatives you can go to your meetings with a great sense of pride in your efforts to strengthen bridges between those who build and sell homes and those with disabilities who want access to them. Awareness is the first step towards change.

\*Before I take your questions, I wanted to touch upon a few

issues on the front burner in the Senate.

\*IRAQ

\*RUSSIA (Will meet this afternoon with the Chairman of  
Ukrainian Parliament)

\*MANDATE LEGISLATION

\*Would be happy to answer any question.