

STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
S. 695 - THE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE ACT

MR. PRESIDENT, I AM PLEASED TO SEE THE SENATE
MOVE TOWARDS PASSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT'S
EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE ACT. THE INITIATIVES AT THE
CORE OF THIS BILL - PRESIDENTIAL MERIT SCHOOLS, THE
NEW SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE PROGRAM, ALTERNATIVE
CERTIFICATION FOR TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS,
ENDOWMENT ASSISTANCE FOR HISTORICALLY

BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, AND THE NATIONAL SCIENCE SCHOLARS PROGRAM -- WILL HELP US ACHIEVE THE EDUCATION GOALS OUTLINED BY THE PRESIDENT IN HIS STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS. I COMMEND THE PRESIDENT FOR PUTTING FORWARD THE PROPOSALS ON WHICH THIS LEGISLATION IS BASED AND I THANK MY COLLEAGUE FROM KANSAS FOR ALL SHE HAS DONE ON BEHALF OF THIS IMPORTANT MEASURE.

THE LEGISLATION BEFORE US IS DESIGNED TO
REWARD EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE, TARGET FEDERAL
FUNDS TO THE MOST NEEDY, PROMOTE FLEXIBILITY, AND
BRING ABOUT MORE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS.
THESE PRINCIPLES HAVE GUIDED THE EDUCATION POLICY
OF THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
LAURO CAVAZOS. AND THEY ARE IDEAS THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE ENDORSE.

AMERICANS KNOW THAT THE EXISTING EDUCATION SYSTEM IS FAILING THEIR CHILDREN - AND THEY WANT AND DEMAND CHANGE. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY BELIEVE EDUCATION SHOULD REMAIN A STATE RESPONSIBILITY AND A LOCAL FUNCTION. PARENTS DON'T WANT UNCLE SAM DICTATING WHAT OR HOW THEIR CHILDREN LEARN. WHERE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE MOST INVOLVED IS IN ENSURING ACCESS TO EDUCATION BY THE DISADVANTAGED, PROMOTING INNOVATION, AND

REWARDING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE. THIS BILL WILL
STRENGTHEN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S LEADERSHIP
ROLE IN THESE CRITICAL AREAS.

MR. PRESIDENT, I AM DISAPPOINTED THAT THE BILL
INCLUDES CERTAIN PROVISIONS WHICH WERE NOT A
PART OF THE PRESIDENT'S PACKAGE AND WHICH,
THOUGH WELL INTENTIONED, WILL NOT IN MY VIEW
ULTIMATELY ADVANCE THE GOALS OF THIS LEGISLATION.
IN PARTICULAR, I DO NOT SUPPORT THE AUTHORIZATION

OF FUNDING FOR THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR
PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS, FOR MANY OF
THE SAME REASONS SOME OF MY COLLEAGUES HAVE
EXPRESSED. I HOPE THAT THESE CONCERNS WILL BE
FULLY ADDRESSED BY THE OTHER BODY.

NOTWITHSTANDING MY SERIOUS CONCERNS ABOUT
THIS PARTICULAR COMPONENT OF THE BILL, I WOULD
STILL URGE MY COLLEAGUES TO GIVE THIS MEASURE
THEIR SUPPORT. WE ALL KNOW WHAT IS AT STAKE.

WITHOUT A SOUND EDUCATION SYSTEM, WE WON'T HAVE
A COMPETITIVE ECONOMY OR A FUNCTIONING
DEMOCRACY. PRESIDENT BUSH CLEARLY UNDERSTANDS
THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION, AND HE HAS
RESPONDED BY PUTTING FORWARD THE PROPOSALS ON
WHICH THIS BILL IS BASED AND BY FORGING A COMPACT
WITH THE NATION'S GOVERNORS TO IMPROVE THE
QUALITY OF EDUCATION. I COMMEND THE PRESIDENT ON
HIS COMMITMENT, AND I URGE THE SENATE TO ACT
FAVORABLY ON HIS EDUCATION INITIATIVE.