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Jason Smith's Capitol Report

DECEMBER 19TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

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*Submitted by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

8th Congressional District - Missouri - Since being sworn into office as your voice in the halls of Congress this past June, I have experienced many frustrations working in Washington. Most upsetting is the unwillingness of Senate leaders to consider common sense bills passed by the House. In fact, less than 25% of the bills that we pass in the House have been signed into law. National news personalities like to refer to Congress as a “do-nothing” body. The truth is, Senate leaders have refused to take up 148 of the 189 bills the House has passed. These are bills that would improve Missouri’s economy and ease burdensome regulations on small businesses and families.

I would like to highlight three key pieces of legislation that I am eager to see taken up in the Senate:

- H.R. 367 – *Regulations From the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2013* (REINS Act)
- H.R. 2218 – *Coal Residuals Rescue and Management Act of 2013*
- H.R. 1526 – *Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act*

Like you, I am concerned about federal regulations imposed by the Obama Administration. In the House of Representatives, I am calling for increased accountability. H.R. 367, known as the REINS Act, requires Congressional approval for “major rules” imposed by the EPA and Obamacare. Unworkable rules and regulations should not be forced on individuals, families and businesses. Regulations should require Congressional approval. America was founded on a system of checks and balances and Congress must be given the power to do so.

Over 80% of our congressional district’s power is generated from coal. Recently, the EPA has imposed cumbersome new regulations for the management and disposal of coal ash. The House has acted to ease the burden with H.R. 2218 that allows states to develop permit programs for coal producers to meet federal minimum requirements while easing production burdens. Cutting through red tape for coal producers in the Eighth District lowers energy prices and helps create and attract jobs in our area.

One of the greatest treasures in the Eighth District is our diversity of natural resources. H.R. 1526 streamlines the regulatory processes to expedite timber harvesting on federal lands which provides tax revenue to school districts and local governments. I have proposed an amendment to this bill that puts a moratorium on new prescribed burns in the Mark Twain National Forest for one year or until the Department of Agriculture provides a report to Congress on the economic impact of the prescribed fires.

We will continue to take action in the House of Representatives to pass pro-growth policies. I urge Harry Reid and other Senate leaders to act. Missouri’s Eighth District shouldn’t have to wait any longer on job creation, lower energy costs, and relief from EPA and Obamacare regulatory burdens.

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