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Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Military Pension Cuts

JANUARY 12TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Military Pension Cuts

*Submitted by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

8th Congressional District - Missouri - As your voice in the halls of Congress, one of the obligations I take most seriously is taking care of our veterans. The brave men and women of our Armed Forces who volunteer to protect our freedoms deserve not only our respect, but also action from Congress that shows true appreciation for their sacrifices.

Shortly before Christmas, Congress passed a budget compromise bill that contained a provision that will reduce the cost-of-living increases for retired military personnel under the age of 62. This provision amounts to a \$6 billion cut in military pensions. I voted against the budget compromise. Chief among my reasons for opposing the bill is the change to military pensions. Simply put, it is wrong for Congress to try and balance the budget by breaking promises made to members of our nation's military.

Worse yet, military retirees are the only group affected by the budget compromise. Changes made to federal civilian retirement programs only apply to future federal civilian employees, not to current federal civilian employees. Cutting veteran's pensions, while funding pensions for civilian federal employees, is a slap in the face to members of our military and their families who have sacrificed so much while defending our freedoms at home and abroad.

Congress can find better ways to save money. I am cosponsoring H.R. 3788, which will repeal the changes to military retirement programs and replace those changes with a requirement that taxpayers provide a valid Social Security number in order to be eligible for tax refunds under the child tax credit. This loophole allows individuals, some of whom are in the country illegally, to fraudulently claim child tax credits.

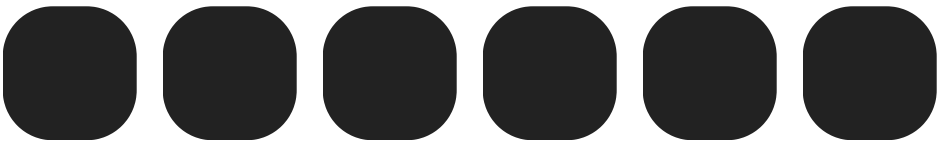
This reform will save roughly \$7 billion over 10 years, which is more than the changes to military pensions are forecasted to save over the same time. This sensible step to stop fraud and abuse in the federal government is a much better option than cutting the pensions of military retirees.

Our men and women in uniform deserve unwavering support from every Member of Congress and all Americans. It is wrong to balance budgets on the backs of troops who voluntarily put themselves in harm's way so that we can all be free. I will continue efforts to restore veteran's pension benefits. The livelihood of our troops should not be negotiable.

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Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Honoring Fighter Aces

JANUARY 03RD 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Honoring Fighter Aces

*Submitted by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

Honoring America's Fighter Aces

8th Congressional District - Missouri - America's veterans make tremendous sacrifices to defend our liberties and freedoms. Recently, I had the honor of cosponsoring HR 565, the American Fighter Aces Congressional Gold Medal Act to recognize America's Fighter Aces. This legislation ensures that Fighter Aces, 51 of whom are from Missouri, will forever be distinguished for their valuable contribution to our War efforts in World War I, World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

To be a Fighter Ace, an individual must shoot down five enemy planes in aerial combat, a feat that has not been accomplished by an American since the Vietnam War. Of the over 1200 Americans who qualified as fighter aces, less than 115 remain alive today. Our Eighth Congressional District is home to three individuals who earned the Fighter Ace distinction. I want to share a little about each man from short biographies compiled by the American Fighter Aces Association.

1. **First Lt. Ralph "Kid" Hofer from Salem, MO**, Ralph Hofer scored 15 aerial victories as a World War II Fighter Ace flying the P-47 Thunderbolt and the P-51 Mustang in the Army Air Corps. Ralph flew with the famed 4th Fighter Group, 334th Fighter Squadron based at Debden, England. The 4th Fighter Group started to receive their P-51 Mustangs in February, 1944 and Ralph called his "Salem Representative" from his hometown of Salem, MO. His last combat mission came on July 2nd, 1944 when on a bomber escort mission en-route to Budapest, Hungary he was attacked by German and Hungarian Bf-109's and eventually fell to Earth near an airfield in Yugoslavia where he was found dead inside the wreckage of his P-51 Mustang. He was buried in a grave near this

airfield but was transferred back to the U.S. in 1950 and is buried in a grave at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in St. Louis.

2. **Lt. Colonel John England from Caruthersville, MO.** John England scored 17.5 victories as Fighter Ace in World War II and Korea. John was accepted into aviation cadet training and was sent to Yuma, Arizona where his flight instructor was future U.S. Senator and presidential candidate Barry Goldwater. John flew the P-51 Mustang throughout his World War II combat tour with the famed 357th Fighter Group based at Leiston, England. John was one of the highest scoring Mustang Aces of World War II and among the highest scoring Air Force Fighter Aces of all time. In 1954, John was returning from a practice mission when weather conditions deteriorated. He attempted to land but ran out of fuel and was headed for a barracks. John purposely crashed his F-86 Sabre jet to avoid hitting the barracks. England Air Force Base in Alexandria, LA is named in his honor.

3. **Captain Raymond Littge from Altenburg, MO.** Ray scored 10.5 aerial victories flying the P-51D Mustang in World War II flying with the 352nd fighter group. Raymond scored his first aerial victory in 1944 downing two German Bf 109's after becoming involved in a furious aerial dog fight with experienced German pilots. Through 1945 he continued to add to his score until he reached 10.5 aerial victories on March 25th, 1945. Ray was well respected by his men of all wars and an excellent leader. He would never back down from a fight in the air! He joined the Regular Air Force in 1946 and was sent to the 78th Fighter Group as Executive Officer based at Hamilton Field California flying the F-84 Thunderjet. He was en route to an air show at Coulee Dam, Washington on May 20th, 1949 when his oxygen supply failed and he crashed to his death.

Ralph Hofer, John England and Raymond Littge earned the Fighter Ace status for their bravery and skill in the air. It is fitting for these men, and America's other Fighter Aces to be recognized through the American Fighter Aces Congressional Gold Medal Act. So much of what happens in Washington is divided by ideological boundaries. Honoring America's Fighter Aces goes far beyond party politics to highlight the selfless service of our nation's greatest fighter pilots.

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Jason Smith's Capitol Report

DECEMBER 19TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report

*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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Kent Hampton's Capitol Report December 11, 2013

DECEMBER 12TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

Kent Hampton's Capitol Report December 11, 2013

*Submitted by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

First In War, First In Peace & First in the Hearts of His Countrymen!

On December 14th, 1799, [George Washington](#), the man described by fellow soldier and Virginian Henry Lee as "first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen" dies at his Mount Vernon estate in [Virginia](#).

Born in Westmoreland County, Virginia, the second son from the second marriage of a colonial plantation owner, Washington rose to eminence on his own merit. His first job at age 17 was as a surveyor in the Shenandoah Valley. In 1752, he joined the British army and served as a lieutenant in the French and Indian War. When the war ended, Washington left the army and returned home to

Virginia to manage Mount Vernon, the plantation he had recently inherited upon the death of his older brother. He married a wealthy widow, Martha Dandridge Custis, in 1759. Although the couple had no children, Washington adopted Martha's son and daughter from her previous marriage. While in Virginia, Washington served in the colonial House of Burgesses and, like many of his compatriots, grew increasingly frustrated with colonial rule by the British government. He soon joined his co-revolutionaries in the [Continental Congress](#).

In 1775, the Continental Congress unanimously chose Washington to command the new Continental Army. Part of his success in the [Revolutionary War](#) was due to his shrewd use of what was then considered the "ungentlemanly," but effective, tactic of "guerrilla" warfare, in which stealthy "hit-and-run" attacks foiled British armies used to close-formation battle-line warfare. Although Washington led almost as many losing battles as he won, his successes at Trenton, Princeton and Yorktown proved pivotal for the Continental Army and the emerging nation. In 1789, largely because of the leadership he displayed during the war, Washington was elected the first American president under the new U.S Constitution.

Washington's stubbornness and concern for protocol proved his undoing.

On December 12, 1799, he rode out into the freezing sleet to survey business affairs on his estate. He returned home late for a dinner engagement and refused to take the time to change out of his wet clothes. On December 13, he developed a severe respiratory infection and died the following day. His last words were "'Tis well."

The nation plunged into a state of mourning and Washington was eulogized by friends and political foes alike, both at home and abroad. (King George III of England once grudgingly called Washington the "greatest character of the age.") In his will, Washington referred to himself simply as "George Washington, of Mount Vernon, a citizen of the [United States](#)."

On a current note, the Missouri Senate and House were called into special session by the Governor pertaining to the location of Boeing Aircraft which is expanding with a new passenger plane. There are four other states in the running besides the state of Missouri. The final proposals had to be submitted by 12/10/13 for a decision to be made by Boeing in January. The Senate proposed the bill provided by information from our Governor and using existing programs available to all businesses as part of the proposal. This is an incentive type

proposal, which means if they do not create at least 2,000 new jobs none of the proposal would take effect providing they select Missouri for their home, where they already have a presence building fighter jets. Suppliers for Boeing are spread all across the state and which a new facility would only increase. When I think of this opportunity, I envision a tree with a large trunk and branches protruding out with a fruitful harvest that can benefit all through suppliers creating jobs.

The Senate passed the bill before the body on Wednesday and then came to the House where it overwhelmingly passed. Due to weather issues, a few members were unable to be at the Capitol for the final vote.

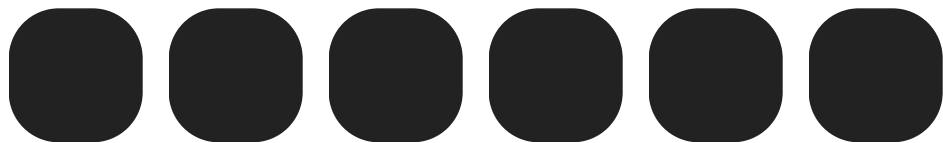
Speaking of weather, Southeast Missouri has entered a weekend of weather. I appreciate all the Departments that are working to keep our power on and our roads safe. We know the Bootheel way of helping and checking on others exists twelve months of the year. For this I am thankful to be part of such a great group of family.

As always, it is an honor to serve you in the Missouri House. If you would like to discuss any issue, please call 573-751-3629. You can also email me at kent.hampton@house.mo.gov . I look forward to hearing from you.

LAST UPDATED ON DECEMBER 12TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Jason Smith's Capitol Report: 2nd Amendment

DECEMBER 06TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report: 2nd Amendment

*Submitted by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

U.N. Arms Treaty Hurts 2nd Amendment Rights Friday, December 6, 2013

8th Congressional District - Missouri - "A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." - Second Amendment, The Constitution of United States

When I was sworn into office to represent Missouri's Eighth Congressional District in the House of Representatives, I took an oath to uphold the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens. The federal government should not compromise the ability of decent Americans to own a gun for protection or sport. Recently, Secretary of State John Kerry signed the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty on behalf of the Obama Administration. The treaty clearly violates the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

The Arms Trade Treaty threatens our Second Amendment rights by including firearms owned by law-abiding citizens in its jurisdiction. The treaty urges recording keeping of firearm sales and transfers for a minimum of ten years. Data kept on imported firearms is a de-facto registry of law-abiding firearms owners, which is a violation of federal law. Even worse, the Arms Trade Treaty could be construed to require such a registry to be made available to foreign governments.

To make my opposition to the Arms Trade Treaty known, I have joined a bipartisan group of 180 House members in sending a letter to President Obama raising our concerns. This letter makes it absolutely clear to President Obama and his administration that the House of Representatives will not support legislation to give this dangerous treaty the legs it

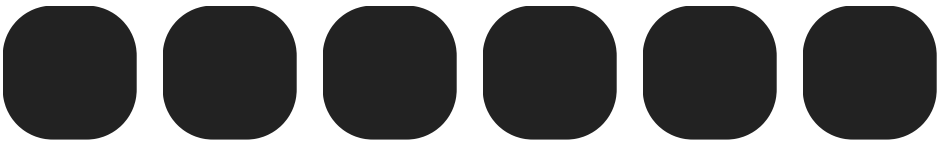
needs to take effect. I will also oppose any efforts by Obama Administration to implement or enforce the Arms Trade Treaty through executive action. The liberty of the American people and the independence of the United States are far too sacred to ever be sacrificed to a dysfunctional global institution like the United Nations.

Since the founding of our country, “the right to keep and bear arms” has been a part of our nation’s fabric. The United Nations Arms Trade Treaty violates the Second Amendment of the Constitution and I will continue speaking out against its implementation. The rights of law-abiding Americans to own firearms must be preserved.

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