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# Jason Smith's Capitol Report - A Year In Review

JANUARY 05TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

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## A Year In Review with Jason Smith

**8th Congressional District** - As 2014 and the 113th Congress draw to a close, I would like to take some time this week to look back and reflect on the 18 months I have been able to serve you in Missouri's Eighth Congressional District. This time last year I wrote a column outlining five goals I had for the year. They were: reining in the IRS and the EPA, returning to a better appropriations process, finding bipartisan solutions for problems, protecting rural America, and watching the Missouri Tigers have another successful football season.

Well, the Tigers are now back-to-back SEC East champions and just won another great bowl game, so we have that goal met! But, in all seriousness, Congress made a lot of progress on the goals I laid out going into last year. First, both the IRS and the EPA have had their budgets slashed by this year's appropriations process. We cut IRS funding to \$345.6 million. That is \$1.5 billion below what the president initially requested and it brings the IRS's funding levels to below what they were in Fiscal Year 2008. In addition, the EPA's budget was cut by \$60 million, marking the fifth consecutive year that Congress has cut their budget. The agency has been slashed over 20 percent and more than 2,000 positions will be eliminated at the EPA, dropping them to their lowest staffing level since 1989.

Second, the House was able to advance seven of the 13 appropriations bills this past year, compared to only four the first year I was in Congress. In comparison, the Democrat-

controlled Senate did not advance a single appropriations bill this year. Additionally, the House passed a final appropriations bill this year that cut spending by \$165 billion since Fiscal Year 2010. This cut, when projected out over 10 years, will save taxpayers an estimated \$2.13 trillion. While our current appropriations process is not perfect, it is moving in the right direction, and I am confident that with Republican control of both chambers next session we will make significantly more progress.

Despite all of the animosity generated by President Obama and Harry Reid's refusal to work with us, House Republicans and Democrats were able to work together on some important solutions. We passed over 370 bipartisan solutions, including legislation to build the Keystone Pipeline, cut EPA regulations, grow jobs and our economy, protect life, guarantee our Second Amendment freedoms, rein in the IRS, ensure our veterans are provided for, and reform our broken healthcare system.

As I have mentioned before, President Obama is continuously waging war on rural America. Whether it is potentially increasing our utility rates with his "War on Coal," weakening our property rights with his proposed "Waters of the United States" rule, or taking away our manufacturing jobs with the prospective ozone "NAAQS" rule, his disregard for our way of life is outrageous. I am completely committed to fighting against the president's anti-rural America agenda. In the House, we have worked on legislation to prevent all of these harmful actions. Combined with the massive cuts we made to the EPA, we are in a great position to further combat the president's attempt to regulate our way of life out of existence.

It is truly an honor to serve you in Congress. I look forward to the future and continuing to work on the goals of stopping IRS and EPA overreach, fixing the appropriations process so that it works for us instead of against us, finding bipartisan solutions, and standing up for rural America.

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