

Political Blogs



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Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, October 30, 2015

NOVEMBER 01ST 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, October 30, 2015

This week I carved a Mizzou pumpkin and donated it to be auctioned off at the Monster Mash Pumpkin Bash to Smash Kids' Cancer! The proceeds go toward finding more effective, less toxic treatments - and a cure - for brain cancer in children.

Dear Friend,

Since you sent me to Washington, I have looked carefully at each piece of legislation that was brought for a vote. Each time, I look at how it would impact the hardworking folks of southeast and southern Missouri. Next, I look to see if the legislation was crafted fairly, and if it upholds the traditions and values of our area. Given the rushed non-transparent process around this week's budget bill, I wasn't surprised when I opened page one and found a bad deal for hardworking taxpayers and farmers. The only reasonable option was to vote no.

This budget deal sets the spending levels for government agencies for the next two years. It sets a new baseline which blows up the sequester caps and increases spending by over \$80 billion. As the owner of our family farm, I know that in business we can't keep increasing lines of credit without reforms or changes to make the business more sustainable. Washington needs to operate the same way. We need people making these decisions who have experience signing the front of the check, not just the back.

It was a huge disappointment that this bill failed to live up to the open and fair process that was promised to the American people. The budget bill was released to the public and to members of Congress a little over 36 hours before the vote. That is unacceptable. Unlike bills that follow the proper path, these 144 pages were not studied by a committee and did not allow for conversations between members or input from families from around the country.

One of the most devastating parts of the bill is the cut to crop insurance. Farmers are already having a tough go; net farm income is projected to drop 53 percent from 2013 to 2015. Government should be making it easier to get ahead, not harder. The government is squeezing crop insurance providers so much that they may no longer be able to stay in business. If that happens, the government would step in, effectively setting up a government takeover of crop insurance. The bill passed despite my opposition, and I am working tirelessly to get this fixed.

Folks rightfully expect Congress to fund America's priorities, but this budget deal does not help people get ahead. It creates more problems that we are going to have fix down the road. We have a long way to go, but I am fighting every day for the people I represent and to make government work for you, not against you.

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Congressman Smith Statement on Paul Ryan

OCTOBER 30TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Congressman Smith Statement on Paul Ryan

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, Congressman Jason Smith released the following statement:

“Today I cast my vote in support of Paul Ryan as the new Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. Paul is someone with deep Midwestern roots and values, and his election as Speaker represents a new direction for House Republicans; a new direction for America.

“Paul Ryan is my Chairman on the House Ways & Means Committee and I am glad that he will now Chair the people’s House. He is a true policy leader and I have never worked with a more inclusive, transparent, and driven individual. Speaker Ryan will focus on the policy and the strategy, not the politics. He does what’s right for the country, not what’s most politically expedient. Paul Ryan is a unifier who has the trust and respect of not only our conference, but of the American people. He will guide the House with a fair and honest hand, while advancing important conservative Republican principles.

“Paul knows that the best way to develop legislation is to bring as many people as possible into the room. In order to get the best policy for this country and the best Speaker for the Midwest; I was glad to support Paul Ryan today for Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.”

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Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, October 16th

OCTOBER 19TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, October 16th

[Congressman Jason Smith Capitol Report: Deja Vu All Over Again Friday, October 16, 2015](#)

It has happened again. Last week, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) caused another spill in Colorado. This time, it was gray water spilled into a creek while working to clean up the Standard Mine. The EPA did not immediately notify the community or affected elected officials.

This spill comes two months after EPA contractors catastrophically dumped three million gallons of toxic water from the Gold King mine into the Animas River, potentially tainting drinking water for thousands. Both the Gold King mine spill and the spill of gray water happened on EPA Superfund sites. The EPA's website explains that the "Superfund program is responsible for cleaning up some of the nation's most contaminated land," but instead of cleaning up our contaminated land, the EPA only made it worse.

The EPA spends \$158 million of taxpayer money on its public relations budget. There are about 200 full-time employees in this division, and the EPA still manages to give another \$15 million to outside public relations consultants. The EPA uses our money to spin the facts, telling Americans to trust them on the disastrous rules and regulations they force on rural America. Take for example the Clean Power Plan that would make energy

significantly more expensive or the Waters of the United States rule which could put every puddle under federal jurisdiction.

I have sponsored three important bills recently to help rein in this out of control agency. First, the No Exemptions for EPA Act states clearly that the EPA should be treated like private companies and held accountable when they cause spills, and it closes any legal loopholes just to make sure. The second is the EPA Pays Act which simply says that when the EPA spills, they have to pay the folks affected. We know the EPA has the money! This bill would use the funds from their public relations account – the same one used to lobby for the Waters of the United States rule – to repair the damage. The third bill is the Judgment Fund Taxpayer Accountability Act which would increase transparency and require agencies like the EPA to fully disclose the amount of money being paid out due to court judgments against the agency. This will show us which agencies are fixing the messes they create and which need to do better by Americans.

It's clear to me that local communities should decide how to best manage their natural resources, not unelected bureaucrats, and the legal system also agrees. Last week, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled to block the Environmental Protection Agency's controversial Waters of the United States provision, effectively stopping the egregious power grab nationwide. EPA bureaucrats are doing more harm than good and I'm using every avenue at my disposal to defund their hypocritical actions.

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Nixon Orders Flags to Be Lowered at Every Fire Station

OCTOBER 14TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Nixon Orders Flags to Be Lowered at Every Fire Station

Jefferson City, Missouri - Gov. Jay Nixon has ordered the flags to be lowered at every fire station in the state of Missouri and at the Fire Fighters Memorial, located in Kingdom City, Mo. to honor Kansas City Fire Department firefighters Larry Leggio and John Mesh, who were killed in the line of duty on Monday (Oct. 12).

In addition, the order from Gov. Nixon to lower the U.S. and Missouri flags also includes government buildings in Cass, Clay, Jackson and Platte counties.

“All Missourians mourn the tragic loss of these brave heroes who gave their lives to save the lives of others,” Gov. Nixon said. “This tragedy is a stark reminder of the difficult and dangerous circumstances that firefighters face each and every day to save lives and protect our communities. When they see the lowered flags, I ask that Missourians pause to honor the ultimate sacrifice made by Larry Leggio and John Mesh and reflect on the dedication of firefighters across our state. Firefighters put themselves in harm’s way for us. Today, and every day, we must stand with them.”

The flags will remain at half-staff through the dates of the funerals for both firefighters

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Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - Friday, September 24, 2015

SEPTEMBER 28TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - Friday, September 24, 2015

I am happy to report to you from last week's report a follow up regarding Mo DOT and the Cultural Diversity Training. The upcoming October class has been cancelled for the time being. I am very pleased with this cancellation. I want to make it clear though, my disapproval is not about learning or becoming more knowledgeable of other cultures and issues.

My disapproval is related to the conditions of our roads and bridges throughout Missouri and the wise use of Missouri tax money. In our district alone, we have quite a lot of bridges that are not far from being closed due to safety. Many Missourians feel that taxes are burdensome and too costly. I feel very strongly that people's lives matter more and safety should come first. Secondly, I feel that Missourians should be consulted as to what they want their tax dollars spent on, Missouri citizens are the ones who work to pay this tax money and should have a say as to how the tax money is spent.

I will continue to advocate for safety first in Mo DOTs funding priorities and encourage you to voice your support to Mo DOT for safety first in their

operations. I will also advocate for the wise use of the tax money the state receives.

I hope everyone is enjoying the Stoddard County Fair this week. Fairs are a wonderful time and place to see how great our area is and what things are grown or made in our area. In our district, the 151st, we are blessed to have a wide variety of agricultural products and businesses, everything from row crops to cattle to irrigation businesses to implement sales. Farmers face many challenges at this time but I am confident, with all of us supporting and encouraging our farmers, they will succeed and so will we all! How can we support our farmers and the Ag businesses in our area? We can buy locally made and home grown items whenever possible. Many of our area businesses are selling items from Missouri producers, buy from these vendors whenever possible. If you have friends that live in other areas of our nation, you can always buy them a made in Missouri item and give it to them for a gift also! Our state has an incredible history of agriculture, in fact, agriculture is vitally important to our state's economy. You and I can help make Missouri a top producer and exporter of agricultural goods in our nation!

I had the wonderful opportunity this week to discuss issues facing our developmentally disabled. As you may remember, during the last session I filed a bill related to the Schools for the Severely Disabled. The bill, if it had passed, would have formed a committee to review the regulations and rules these schools are required to follow, the committee would have then made recommendations to the General Assembly as to what we, at the State level, can do to allow the teachers and administrators to better serve these special students. I was able to successfully get the bill attached as an amendment to the Education Omnibus Bill but the entire bill died in the Senate the last week of session.

I was disappointed with this outcome but learned a lot through the process. I am continuing to learn about the issues and challenges facing our School for the Severely Disabled. Developmentally disabled students face long-term challenges that significantly delay or limit mental or physical development and substantially interfere with life activities. I am encouraged by our local support of children with developmental disabilities. In our area we have, that I am aware of, three non-profit agencies and one for-profit agency that serve developmentally disabled children and adults. There are many ways to become involved to support these

groups and to volunteer if you are able.

If you know of someone that would benefit from services, you can contact the Poplar Bluff Satellite Regional Office at 2351 Kanell Blvd., Poplar Bluff, MO 63901 or call 573-840-9300.

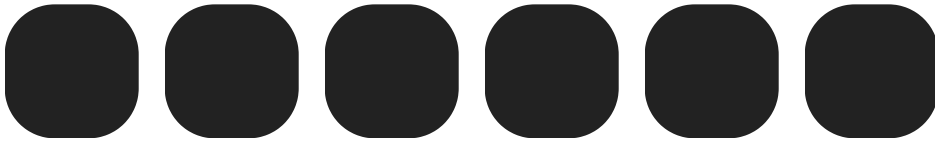
I look forward to advocating for the Developmentally Disabled in the future and will be working to remove burdensome regulations that are not based in common sense from the Schools for the Severely Disabled.

Until next week,

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