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Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, November 6, 2015

NOVEMBER 09TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, November 6, 2015

Service and Sacrifice Friday, November 6, 2015

Since 1775, our brave military men and women have fought for freedom and democracy. On this Veterans Day we remember our service members that have bravely faced the challenges of a dangerous world from the Revolutionary War to today's War on Terror. Like so many, military service has been a part of my family. My uncle courageously fought in Vietnam earning a purple heart. Because of the selfless service of many like him, my commitment is to ensure that our veterans are treated with respect and receive the benefits they earned.

Recently, I have worked to reform the Department of Veterans Affairs. I sponsored the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, legislation to provide much needed assistance to the heroes of our nation who were exposed to different chemical toxins while sacrificing for our country during the Vietnam War. I also worked to get veterans living in rural areas better access to care. It has been more than a year since we learned that at least 40 veterans died while waiting months and even years for care in the VA health system. Veterans should be able to see the doctor they want, close to home. There's no excuse for bureaucracy obstructing our veterans from getting the care they were promised when the rest of the health care industry is innovating and finding ways to help more patients with shorter wait times.

We also are working to root out fraud and abuse at the VA. This week, the House Veterans Affairs Committee subpoenaed VA employees who abused the relocation payments in the department – abuse found by the VA’s own inspector general. It also was discovered that the VA paid \$23 million to people on leave, and had no tracking mechanism. This is unacceptable and our veterans deserve better.

Meeting and helping our heroes is one of the best parts of my job, and twice this year I was honored to meet members of the Greatest Generation when they visited their WWII memorial in Washington, D.C. Those veterans from southeast and south central Missouri, along with many of their children and grandchildren for the first time saw how the nation was honoring their service. Additionally, I sponsored a bill that would pay tribute to those who served in the Korean War, a war in which 945 Missourians lost their lives.

When I talk with veterans, some are surprised to learn that my office can help with VA problems. If you are a veteran having trouble, please contact one of my offices for help. You can find all of the offices listed on my website at www.jasonsmith.house.gov. We can help you navigate the VA bureaucracy, get the benefits you have earned, or replace lost or stolen medals.

Join with me this Veterans Day in remembering and thanking those who served our country so honorably. As Ronald Reagan said, “We owe this freedom of choice and action to those men and women in uniform who have served this nation and its interests in time of need.”

Pictured below, Senator Bob Dole and I recently helped welcome WWII veterans from Missouri to their memorial in Washington, D.C. I am forever grateful for the service and sacrifice of the Greatest Generation.

[/images/2015 Images/WWII Veterans.jpg](#)

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Congressman Smith Visits Bernie High School on Friday

NOVEMBER 07TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Congressman Smith Visits Bernie High School on Friday

Bernie, Missouri - On Friday, Congressman Jason Smith brought Congress to the classroom, speaking with students at Bernie High School. Congressman Smith took questions on a variety of topics including the presidential race, immigration, and welfare.

"I had a great discussion with the students at Bernie High School. They are engaged and very aware of what's going on in the world around them," said Smith. "These students represent our future, and that future looks bright in Bernie."

As one of the youngest members of the House of Representatives, Congressman Smith connects with students during frequent "Congress in the Classroom" discussions, both in person and via video chat.

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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.

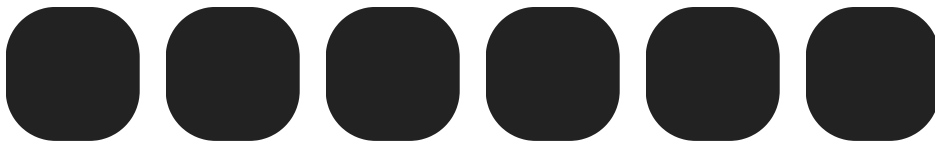
“Paul Ryan is my Chairman on the House Ways & Means Committee and I am glad that he will now Chair the people’s House. He is a true policy leader and I have never worked with a more inclusive, transparent, and driven individual. Speaker Ryan will focus on the policy and the strategy, not the politics. 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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