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Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, November 13, 2015

NOVEMBER 16TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

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*Home Is What Makes Us
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If Washington was more like Missouri, America would be a lot better off. This is something I have always thought, but over my first couple years in Congress it has become more and more true. Here in Missouri, things like family, liberty, personal and fiscal responsibility, and good ol' common sense are held true, yet they are simply missing from our nation's capital.

I was lucky enough to grow up right here in southern Missouri. As a Salem native, early on I learned values such as hard work and perseverance – cutting brush, hauling hay, picking up rocks, mowing lawns, and scraping parts at my dad's auto shop – if you didn't have blisters on your hands you weren't giving it your all. That type of hard work shaped me into the person I am today.

While now my job takes me out to our nation's capital – I always try for the first flight home and the latest flight back to D.C. each week so that I can spend as much time as possible talking with the folks I am honored to represent. On Sundays I enjoy attending my home church, Grace Community, and seeing the same faces I have come to know over the years; it's a true sense of home. I have never felt comfortable in Washington and I am not sure I ever will. I will never call Washington home and each night there I sleep on an

air mattress in my office so that I can work late, rise early, and return to my true home as soon as possible.

Sitting in a Congressional hearing, reviewing legislation, or casting a vote on the House Floor I am always mindful of the folks back home. How will this law affect them? How would their lives change? Are we enhancing their freedoms and liberties as an American? The people of southern and southeast Missouri are family-focused, hardworking, and they just want the government off their back and out of their business. They are the machinists, nurses, farmers, and teachers I meet when I travel throughout the district. I was recently in Dexter, Missouri, speaking to business leaders about topics including the confusing tax code, burdensome regulations, and the persistent war on small business and rural America. They all just want Washington to stop interfering, get out of the way, and let them grow their businesses and communities.

Simply put, we need Washington to function a lot more like Missouri – a balanced budget amendment, looking each other in the eye, and having someone’s word and handshake be binding. Washington has lost its way. We have a record high debt, freedoms are being eroded, and folks wonder if America is ever going to get back on track. Across the country American’s worry about stagnant wages and finding a job. Every day, families are struggling to keep up with rising health care, food, and energy costs.

In the Show-Me State, we are taught that if we put hard work, living within our means, and taking care of family in focus and in our hearts, we can be proud of the life we lead. I hope that during my time in Washington I can instill some of those same lessons and values in the leaders I serve alongside – helping correct the direction of Washington and the dysfunction in your government.

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