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# Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, November 20, 2015

NOVEMBER 30TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, November 20, 2015

## **Congressman Jason Smith Capitol Report: Keeping America and Missouri Safe Friday, November 20, 2015**

The terror attacks last week in Paris served as a wake-up call to all of us.

Of extreme alarm is that one of the terrorists was found to be carrying a Syrian refugee passport. This discovery clearly points to the fact that we need to get a better grasp on the origin, background, intentions, and makeup of the hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing the Middle East, specifically places like Syria.

The Obama administration has announced it will increase the number of worldwide refugees accepted into the U.S. each year from 70,000 to 100,000 by 2017. I have serious concerns with the administration's ability to ensure Americans' safety by properly vetting the current refugees entering the U.S., let alone a dramatic increase. What has become evident is that these terrorists are set on exploiting the serious humanitarian crisis of women, families, children, and students fleeing the war-torn regions these same terrorists created.

Officials from the National Counterterrorism Center and the FBI have expressed the same concerns to Congress. Terrorists and foreign fighters are looking to take advantage of the

situation in order to get into the United States and cause harm. FBI Director James Comey told Congress back in October that the federal government lacked the ability to conduct the thorough background checks needed to vet the Syrian refugees the president wants to let in.

It is the number one job of the federal government to provide for the defense and security of the American people. That is why this week the House of Representatives passed legislation I helped sponsor to put a stop to the president's proposal to bring more refugees into this country. The American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act passed the U.S. House with an overwhelming show of bipartisan support – more than 45 Democrats joined with Republicans to provide a veto-proof majority – ordering the FBI and Department of Homeland Security to put the brakes on bringing in any more refugees to the U.S. The administration needs to certify to Congress that these individuals are not a threat to national security. The bill wasn't about pushing Republican ideas, it wasn't about pushing Democrat ideas, it was about Congress coming together to keep Americans safe, and the best way to do that is to provide no doubt that there are no terrorists entering this country.

Additionally, I sent a letter to Governor Nixon this week urging him to end any immediate plans to bring Syrian refugees to Missouri. We need to do what is necessary to keep Missouri families safe. In the letter I noted that “the president's plan to increase the number of Syrian refugees admitted to the United States poses a genuine threat to the American people.” This week, I also sent a letter to President Obama urging him to immediately halt admissions of refugees from Syria and Iraq onto American soil, and demanded that his administration notify Congress before any refugee policy changes.

This is not about being uncompassionate towards the refugees of Syria, but about keeping Americans safe and keeping the residents of Missouri safe. We cannot let terrorists exploit our country's long-standing tradition of compassion by posing as refugees from Syria or any other country.

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## Senate Passes Resolution Supporting National Adoption Month

NOVEMBER 18TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Senate Passes Resolution Supporting National Adoption Month

**Washington, D.C.** - Today, the Senate passed a resolution, introduced by U.S. Senators Roy Blunt (Mo.) and Amy Klobuchar (Minn.), supporting the goals of National Adoption Month and National Adoption Day. November is National Adoption Month and Nov. 21 is National Adoption Day.

“Adoption is a gift that has enriched the lives of millions of families, including my own,” said Blunt. “Every child deserves a stable, loving home, and I hope more families will use this opportunity to consider welcoming a child into their lives through adoption.”

Blunt and Klobuchar serve as co-chairs of the bipartisan Congressional Coalition on Adoption, which works with the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute to engage Members of Congress on issues pertaining to children in need of permanent homes, children in the foster care system, and domestic and international child welfare.

“As Senate co-chair of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption, I’ve had the opportunity to witness the power of adoption firsthand,” Klobuchar said. “Recognizing November as National Adoption Month, and November 21 as National Adoption Day, are ways to honor the big hearts and hard work of adoptive families while focusing on how we can provide these families with the support they need and deserve.”

As the resolution notes, there are currently more than 400,000 children in the U.S. foster care system, with more than 100,000 ready to be adopted. In 2014, more than 22,000 youth “aged out” of foster care, reaching adulthood without being placed in a permanent home.

Earlier this year, Blunt and Klobuchar introduced the Supporting Adoptive Families Act to provide resources for pre- and post-adoption support services, including training, counseling, and mental health treatment.

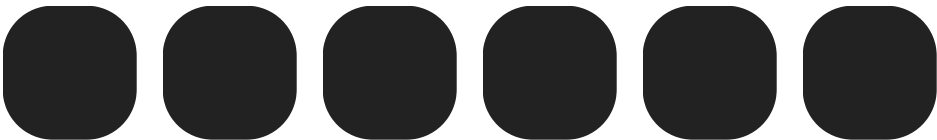
Blunt and Klobuchar have also co-sponsored the Adoption Tax Credit Refundability Act and the Adoptive Family Relief Act, which was signed into law last month.

Read the full text of the resolution [here](#).

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# Missouri House Speaker Honors SASA Club Founder

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NOVEMBER 17TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Missouri House Speaker Honors SASA Club Founder

**Poplar Bluff, Missouri** - Speaker Todd Richardson issued a Poplar Bluff High School senior a resolution on behalf of the Missouri House of Representatives on Thursday, Nov. 11, for founding Students Against Sexual Assault, the only such student-led organization in the state on the high school level as far as the legislator is aware of, he said.

With full support of the R-I administration and Board of Education, Grace Hudson established SASA this school year to raise awareness and protect teens from sexual assault, and domestic and dating violence.

With participation from about 70 members, presenters during monthly meetings have included martial artist Judy Schremp, Warrior Strength & Power owner, who shared self-defense techniques; and Mary Ann Allen, Haven House executive director, who talked about the community's shelter for domestic violence victims and their children.

PBHS communication arts teacher Beth Fox-Godwin serves as the sponsor of the after school club. For more information about SASA, visit their Facebook page by clicking **HERE**.

Shown in the photos: Speaker Todd Richardson recites to Grace Hudson a Missouri House proclamation, which recognized the student for advocating for victims of sexual assault and giving a "voice to this critical societal problem."

Photo and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Coordinator, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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

NOVEMBER 16TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

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

*Home Is What Makes Us  
Friday, November 13, 2015*

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

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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](http://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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