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Jason Smith's Capitol Report: Protecting Farm & Family - Thursday, December 24, 2015

DECEMBER 26TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report: Protecting Farm & Family - Thursday, December 24, 2015

Washington D.C. - 8th Congressional District - This past week Congress completed its legislative work for the calendar year. While much of what was jammed through Congress in the 11th hour represented more of the same in Washington; there was one piece of legislation which will provide large scale tax relief to American families, farmers and business owners, which I was proud to support, the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act.

As a Member of the Ways & Means Committee, the Committee with jurisdiction over all federal taxation issues, I helped author one provision in particular – making **permanent** section 179 expensing levels. Section 179 of the U.S. Tax Code allows small businesses, farmers, and small manufacturers to immediately expense the purchase of certain equipment. Had we not taken action, come January 1st, the tax rate on that equipment would have increased by almost 2000%!

Since 2003, section 179 expensing levels have been extended on a temporary, uncertain, ad-hoc basis on ten different occasions – usually for one or two years at best. That type of tax code policy does nothing to allow farmers and business owners to plan for the future. Without certainty on what their tax rates, folks can't manage their farm or business properly nor know how much they will have to expand, invest and grow their operation. The more certainty congress can provide about long term tax rates, the more farmers and businesses can help our economy and create new jobs.

This is a major step to give farmers more peace of mind for the long term while also providing for a major reduction in taxes. Without this action, taxes would have gone up on the very farmers that keep our rural economy moving. Making this provision permanent finally ends the charade of temporary extensions and patches of U.S. tax code policy. Working on and advancing major wins like this for the farmers of Missouri was the exact reason I fought to get on the Ways & Means Committee. We are finally allowing farmers, manufactures and small business owners to plan financially for the long term so they can help grow their farm or business here in America.

Additionally, permanently extending section 179 helps provide the framework and path forward for large scale U.S. tax code overhaul in 2016 and 2017. As a Member of the House Ways & Means Committee, I have been focused on reducing the complex and cumbersome tax code facing families and employers. Simply put, we need to replace our current 75,000 page tax code with a simpler, fairer and flatter system, one which helps rural families and farmers, while getting the IRS out of their lives.

We should be looking for ways to help our farmers and families, not make running a farm or family more difficult. By providing this permanent tax relief we finally took a step in that direction. There is no better way to grow our economy than establishing a less burdensome and less costly tax code, which allows you to keep more of your hard earned money. As your voice in Washington I will continue to advocate for needed relief from unnecessary regulations, out of control spending, and a punitive tax code.

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Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, December 18, 2015

DECEMBER 22ND 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, December 18, 2015

Dear Friend,

This week, without my support, Congress voted to fund the government for another year. The 2,009-page bill negotiated behind closed doors was a bad deal for rural America and a bad deal for southeast and southcentral Missouri. Simply put, this legislation funded more priorities for the president, than for the folks back home.

The funding bill fell short in efforts to rein in the out of control EPA and to defund job killing regulations done by presidential order. Not reducing EPA funding by even \$1 is simply unacceptable. The refusal to include efforts to defund the catastrophic Waters of the U.S. regulation, the President's new Power Plan, Ambient Air Quality regulations or new Washington rules on wood burning stoves are just some examples of concern. The EPA's disastrous combination of new rules and regulations place extreme burdens on Missouri families and job creators. These rules are simply going to force businesses to shut down and Congress should be using the power of the purse to fight back.

The EPA's proposed Waters of the United States rule could allow the EPA to regulate nearly every area of the ground that gets wet or has flow during rainfall. The new Presidential Power Plan sets new untested coal standards, drastically increasing the cost of power for the main source used to keep the lights on across Missouri. In our state, 83 percent of our energy comes from coal power. The EPA's new National Ambient Air Quality Standards is a regulation The Center for Regulatory Solutions is calling the most expensive regulation in U.S. history. Unfortunately with this government funding bill we

missed an opportunity to address any of these new Washington regulations.

There is no doubt this legislation included both good and bad components - but in my judgement the bad trumped the good. I appreciated efforts within the legislation to repeal costly COOL requirements important to our nation's farmers and reforms made to our Visa Waiver Program, but I was hopeful for the inclusion of stronger pro-life language. Of additional alarm, there was a failure to include important provisions previously passed by the House which provided greater security to the residents of Missouri by certifying that proper screening is taking place before any new refugees are allowed into this country. Rather than waiting years for the courts to decide whether or not the president can grant national amnesty with the stroke of a pen, we should be using the fact that Congress appropriates all federal funding to put an end to those efforts right now.

Congress must use the power of the purse to reflect the priorities of the people. I voted 'NO' because this bill represented more business as usual in Washington - it did not live up to promises I have made to you of greater transparency, pushing back against a regulation happy White House and advancing priorities important to those back home.

Sincerely,

Jason Smith
Member of Congress

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Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - Friday, December 18, 2015

DECEMBER 19TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - Friday, December 18, 2015

Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday Season

In a few days families will gather together to celebrate the birth of Christ. With the ones we care about most, we will share our love and exchange gifts as a way of reminding one another of how much we care and how deeply blessed we truly are. I hope you and your family will have a Merry Christmas filled with love and warmth. I also hope you will not overlook the real reason for the season; something that is too often lost amidst the hustle and bustle of shopping and other Christmas preparations.

At the same time, we celebrate Christmas with heavy hearts in the wake of the tragic events that have taken place around the world and here in the United States. The terrorist attacks in Paris and in San Bernardino served as reminders that there are those who oppose our way of life, and the beliefs and values that make America the greatest nation in the world.

I hope it also reminds us to appreciate even more deeply the precious moments we have with our own loved ones. Let us never take for granted the many blessings the Lord has given us. Let it also remind us that there are men and women in our Armed Forces who will not spend Christmas with their loved ones as they stand the watch in defense of our great nation. This Christmas, we must not forget or take for granted their service.

We are a nation blessed with a wealth of riches and, even in the face of unspeakable tragedy, we will come together to help and to heal. May you and yours have a Merry Christmas and may God bless each and every one of you!

The True Meaning of Christmas

I'm sure many have seen the animated television special, "A Charlie Brown Christmas", and I hope that those who haven't will take the time to watch this program that reminds us of the true meaning of Christmas. It's during the show that Charlie Brown is dismayed about the over-commercialization of the holiday and struggling to understand the true meaning of Christmas. At one point, Charlie Brown wonders aloud if anyone really knows the true meaning of Christmas. Linus responds by reciting the Gospel of Luke, chapter 2, verses 8 through 14:

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill towards men.

"That's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown," Linus says as he finishes.

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Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, December 4, 2015

DECEMBER 06TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, December 4, 2015

[Congressman Jason Smith Capitol Report: Energy Regulations Impact the Heartland December 4, 2015](#)

Last Friday, while we were all deep in Thanksgiving leftovers, thinking no one was watching, President Obama unveiled a new deluge of regulations that will hit rural America hard. Of the more than 20,000 proposed new regulations, 144 are expected to cost the economy \$100 million each.

This comes at the same time Barack Obama is at the U.N. climate conference in Paris signing America up for global regulations on energy production. In another effort to sidestep Congress, they have declared that any deal agreed to in Paris will not be considered an international treaty subject to congressional approval, but instead a binding agreement. That is why this week I helped offer a resolution in the U.S. House requiring that any agreement made by the president in Paris seek the advice, approval and consent of Congress.

It's clear that the policies President Obama has been pushing will make energy more costly for rural America. The EPA has plans to unleash new and unvetted air quality standards that could likely put all 30 counties in our Eighth Congressional District out of compliance. These new standards written by bureaucrats in Washington would even classify the Mark Twain National Forest as uncompliant due to carbon released by the trees. Implementing the changes would cost Missouri alone \$1.9 billion. One of the rules

the president is pushing forward which will have serious implications for Missouri is his so-called "Clean Power Plan" rule. Our state gets more than 83 percent of its energy from coal power and this plan will drastically increase the price of energy for rural families and businesses. This is why on Tuesday we passed two resolutions in the House with my support which would prevent implementation of the president's ill-conceived power rules.

In addition to the new power rules, the Obama EPA is also trying to go around Congress to regulate everyday occurrences like farm dust, smoke from barbeque grills and even put new regulations on wood burning stoves. In our area, about 30,000 households use wood heat to warm their homes. Trying to limit how often Americans can use heat provided by a wood stove will have a drastic impact on rural America. That is why on Thursday the U.S. House passed my amendment to eliminate this expensive new regulation and help keep energy affordable and available to folks that need it.

It has become all too common for this president to try and subvert Congress and the Constitution by passing his agenda through presidential fiat. Whether it's trying to push through new energy standards which have already been rejected by Congress or trying to regulate every river, stream, lake and pond on a farm there is no end to this president's efforts to circumvent the other branches of government. Passing my amendment Thursday is a good step, but we must continue to fight back against the president's disastrous plans because Missouri and all of rural America depends on it.

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Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, November 27, 2015

DECEMBER 01ST 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, November 27, 2015

Congressman Jason Smith Capitol Report: Giving Thanks November 27, 2015

“The year that is drawing toward its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies.” - Abraham Lincoln, 1863 Thanksgiving proclamation

Despite the fruitful fields, America was divided. We were in the middle of the Civil War and President Lincoln’s words were needed to unite us in country and spirit. That Thanksgiving, President Lincoln prayed for “the Almighty hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it, as soon as may be consistent with the divine purposes, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility, and union.”

At a time when the news is filled with stories of division and anger, of hurt and discontent, it was especially important to gather this Thanksgiving and be thankful for the many blessings that sustain us. As I have done every year since childhood, I was lucky enough to spend this time with my family. Whether first hosted by my grandmother or eventually my mother, Thanksgiving for me has always been a day filled with eating, playing games and enjoying the company of family until well after midnight. This year was no different and I enjoyed every minute of spending time with those that I love. It was also a time to reflect and continue to give thanks to God for our freedom, for the brave men and women who fight so valiantly to preserve it, for the health and well-being of my family, and for the community that we are all so fortunate to call home.

Our area is one of the most generous places in the country, and at no time is that more evident than during the holiday season. On Thanksgiving Day, beyond the parades,

stuffing, and football, churches like The Missing Peace Church in Park Hills and the First Baptist Church in West Plains were looking after those in need by providing free turkey dinners with all the trimmings to anyone who visited. Volunteers at Shared Blessings Homeless Shelter in Bonne Terre were hand-delivering 1,000 meals to those in the community. And with Christmas right around the corner, Jefferson Elementary School Student Santas are already preparing to host 300 people for a Christmas dinner in Cape Girardeau. These are just some of the hundreds of examples around our great district of individuals and organizations working this time of year to help families put food on the table and toys under the tree. It is an inspiring reminder of the sense of community we have right here at home.

This year, as in years past, our offices will be participating in local food drives to help those in need. Offices in Cape Girardeau, Farmington, Poplar Bluff, Rolla, and West Plains will serve as drop off points for different food collections going on in their communities this holiday season. Please stop by any of those offices if you would like to make a donation.

Let us always, with one heart and one voice, share our blessings and serve our neighbors; it is the true meaning of the season.

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