



[TOP](#)

Jason Smith's Capitol Report - January 8, 2016

JANUARY 11TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report - January 8, 2016

SCRUBing Away the D.C. Regulatory Machine

Dear Friend,

175,268. That is the number of pages in the Code of Federal Regulations. Across south central and southeast Missouri that number weighs heavy on the backs of small businesses, farmers and families. It also represents a serious problem in Washington: a president circumventing Congress to try and force his rejected policy ideas on the American people.

In 2009, the president failed to get his signature "Cap & Trade" legislation through a Democrat controlled Congress - a policy which would increase the cost of heating homes across the nation. Faced with that failure, the president and the EPA rolled out "Clean Power Plan" regulations in August aimed at bypassing the rejection of Congress to implement Cap & Trade through Executive order. Folks across the 8th Congressional District have told me this regulation alone would make their utility bills triple in cost.

Just this week we saw once again a president intent on going around Congress and against the will of American's people by pushing forward new 'Executive Actions' to try and further restrict 2nd amendment rights.

Outdated and often times conflicting federal regulations, never approved by Congress, are now estimated to impose a nearly \$1.86 trillion burden annually on Americans. That's a cost of roughly \$15,000 for every household - higher than the weight of all individual income taxes paid each year to the government. Under the Obama Administration over 24,000 new Federal Rules & Regulations have been finalized, unfortunately the president is now threatening to aggressively grow that list during his final year in office.

This system of burdensome regulations needs to stop. Whether it is in my own business, the state capitol or the halls of Washington, DC, I have been fighting the regulatory machine. This week the House of Representatives took a serious step in regulation reform by passing a bill I authored known as the SCRUB Act - legislation aimed at 'scrubbing' the maze of federal regulations of outdated, unnecessary, costly and duplicative rules which conflict with those at the State or Local level, returning power back to the states.

For example Department of Labor should not be telling FFA students in Missouri they can't do work on the family farm. The National Park Service should not be introducing new regulations restricting the decades old practice of river baptisms on the Current River. The EPA doesn't need to regulate every drainage ditch, farm, wood stove or even the beautiful clean air of the Mark Twain National Forest. Manufacturers in our district shouldn't have to close, shed 500 jobs, and move south of the border to Mexico because the cost of complying with over-regulation just becomes too high here in America.

The insanity of the Washington Regulatory Machine needs to stop. This is why my SCRUB Act is so important. It will give the American people the tools to get Washington bureaucrats who have never owned a business or been on a farm off their backs. America's future with SCRUB in place is one where the regulators have to answer to you, where we finally clean out the cluttered garage of federal red tape and let job creators and producers return focus back to what they know best - growing our economy.

Sincerely,

Jason Smith

8th Congressional District - Missouri

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Smith's Bill Passes to Reduce Federal Regulatory Burdens

JANUARY 07TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Jason Smith's Bill Passes to Reduce Federal Regulatory Burdens](#)

Jan 7, 2016 Press Release

On bipartisan vote Smith bill passes to reduce federal regulatory burdens

Washington, DC – Today, [legislation authored by Congressman Jason Smith](#) (MO-08) passed the U.S. House on a bipartisan vote of 245-174. The Smith bill, known as H.R. 1155, the Searching for and Cutting Regulations that are Unnecessarily Burdensome (SCRUB) Act would eliminate and remove outdated federal regulations now estimated to impose nearly a \$1.86 trillion burden on Americans.

Upon passage, **U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan commented**, “A thorough review of federal regulations holding back opportunity in this country is long overdue. I congratulate Representative Smith on passage of this bill and for serving as a leader on regulatory reform. His work to bring greater accountability to government is of great service to the business owners, farmers and families who are facing a maze of costly and complex Washington

regulations. This legislation provides an important check on a lame duck White House intent on pushing through more rules, regulations and executive orders inconsistent with the will of the American people.”

After the vote, **Representative Smith said the following**, “175,268 pages of federal regulations are stifling economic growth and opportunity in this country. The SCRUB Act sets up a process to finally review and get off the books and out of the way many of these outdated, burdensome, duplicative and unnecessary regulations.”

Smith continued, “The American people have had enough of this White House circumventing Congress to try to push through its failed policy attempts with new regulatory and rule making. A bureaucrat in Washington should not be telling a farmer in the bootheel of Missouri or a small business owner in Poplar Bluff how to run their operation. With the SCRUB Act we place that power back into the hands of the people who are actually affected on a daily basis by the regulations coming out of Washington.”

Committee on Oversight & Government Reform Chairman Jason Chaffetz said, “Today’s House passage of the SCRUB Act is an important step toward reducing unnecessary regulation. Regulations can be necessary to ensure health and safety. But excessive and outdated regulations only serve to divert limited resources to efforts that waste time and money. This bill provides the opportunity for tremendous savings for government agencies and the public at large. I applaud the good work of Congressman Smith in drafting this legislation.”

H.R. 1155, the SCRUB Act establishes a commission set by the President, U.S. Senate & U.S. House Leaders to review, remove and eliminate regulations that are unnecessary, outdated or conflict with state or local regulations. According to a recent estimate, the federal regulatory burden adds up to a cost of approximately \$15,000 annually per U.S. household. Specifically, the legislation ensures a system of checks and balances in the review process and prioritizes review of regulations that are major rules, are more than 15 years old, impose paperwork burdens that can be reduced substantially without significantly diminishing effectiveness, or impose disproportionately high costs on small businesses. Additionally, the Commission will prioritize removing federal regulations that are either duplicative or conflict with State regulations or can be strengthened while reducing costs.

Key Federal Regulatory Highlights:

- Federal regulations now impose an estimated burden of \$1.86 trillion. That is roughly \$15,000 per U.S. household and higher than combined individual and corporate federal income taxes.
- The Code of Federal Regulations now contains 175,268 pages of regulations in 235 volumes.
- Under the Obama Administration over 24,000 Federal Rules & Regulations have been finalized.
- In 2009, H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy & Security Act, better known as ‘Cap & Trade’ failed to advance on the Senate Floor under the leadership of then Leader Harry Reid & Speaker Nancy Pelosi. On August 3, 2015 the President & EPA announced new regulations known as the “Clean Power Plan” aimed at circumventing Congress to achieve the goals of Cap & Trade.
- On January 5, 2016 the President announced new Executive Actions on guns to achieve new policy measures without Congressional approval.

Congressman Smith has been leading the charge to keep expensive and unnecessary rules from bankrupting families, farms, and businesses since he was in the Missouri State House.

"In the time I have known Jason as a public servant he has always demanded more accountability and transparency from government, he did it in Jefferson City and I am not surprised to see him leading the same

type of effort now in Washington, DC," **said Missouri Speaker of the House Todd Richardson.** Adding, "I am proud of the work Congressman Smith has taken up and his leadership on the SCRUB Act to curtail the overbearing reach that so many small business owners, farmers, families, and taxpayers are feeling here in Southeast Missouri and the rest of our state."

H.R. 1155 was supported by the National Association of Manufacturers, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council, National Taxpayers Unions, Americans for Tax Reform and others.

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Jason Smith's Capitol Report - January 1, 2016

JANUARY 01ST 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Jason Smith's Capitol Report - January 1, 2016](#)

A Week to Remember

With record rainfall and historic water levels on the Mississippi and surrounding rivers, we closed 2015 with the very real and scary reminder of the power of mother nature.

When Christmas approached, constant rainfall and a quickly rising Mississippi River replaced holiday cheer and laughter amongst friends and family with concerns for safety and well-being of those same individuals we love. A relentless rain left many worried about the potential for historic river crests and topping of levee systems stretching across hundreds of miles of the Mississippi River. The levee system in southeast Missouri and the hard work of the people who serve on our levee and drainage districts are integral in protecting homes, businesses and hundreds of thousands of acres of farm land along the Mississippi River.

On Monday, I rode the Bois Brule Levee near McBride in eastern Perry County to survey the rising river. That levee alone protects 16 houses, numerous businesses and 26,000 acres of farm land. From there I attended a public meeting in St Genevieve to discuss rising waters and safety concerns. There, city officials asked residents to move belongings and prepare as though an evacuation would be needed.

I spent Wednesday with the Army Corps of Engineers, county officials and emergency personnel down in the Bootheel touring the Birds Point & Commerce Levees and the 1500 foot New Madrid gap. We also stopped in Van Buren to speak with emergency officials about the status of the Current River that was rising quickly and threatening a portion of the town. I stressed with the Army Corps the importance of participating in a public meeting so that residents could hear from them directly about the status of the river and levees and so that they could hear from those same folks about any questions or concerns they have. I was glad the Army Corps agreed and we were able to organize this important meeting on Thursday at the Clara Drinkwater Library in Charleston.

When river levels rise, safety should and will always remain the number one concern. I also want to make sure everything is being done by the Army Corps to protect the very businesses and farmland in the floodways which support thousands of families throughout southeast Missouri and the homes they live in.

Christmas teaches us about the birth of Christ and the spirit of giving, compassion, and kindheartedness. This Christmas, beyond just giving gifts we learned those lessons in a very real way. I saw firsthand those values in the hundreds of county officials, levee board officers, emergency personnel, volunteers and residents I met with along the Mississippi River. Watching students over their Christmas break sandbag to protect their communities is something I will never forget and I am grateful for the honor to represent

such people before the U.S. Congress. There is nowhere else on earth you can find such hardworking and genuine people who truly represent the meaning of Christmas.

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Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - January 1, 2016

JANUARY 01ST 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - January 1, 2016](#)

A Farewell to 2015

In what seems like the blink of an eye, 2015 came and went and along the way carried with it both dramatic highs and devastating lows. The year started with a legislative session with an ambitious agenda that the General Assembly worked hard to complete. Major successes included medical malpractice reforms to keep the costs of health care in check; reforms to the state's system of welfare to give Missourians in need an incentive to get back to work; and a fix to the state's unemployment system meant to ensure benefits are available to the jobless while also protecting

business owners from excessive taxes and fees. The legislature also came together to pass landmark municipal court reform legislation meant to crack down on the predatory practices some municipalities have used to raise revenue through excessive traffic tickets.

Sadly, the accomplishments of the General Assembly were overshadowed by several tragic events that sent shockwaves not just through the Capitol, but through the state and nation as well. It was in late February when legislators were devastated by the news that State Auditor Tom Schweich had taken his own life. Members immediately gathered for a prayer service in the House Chamber as they tried to cope and support one another during such an emotionally trying time. The anguish was amplified just a few weeks later when one of Schweich's key staffers made the decision to take his own life as well. Again, members were reminded that all life is precious but fragile, and that the political pressure cooker can sometimes drive individuals to make decisions with tragic consequences.

Outside the state of Missouri, the year produced several difficult moments that left Americans and many around the globe in tears. Terrorist attacks in Paris – both at the beginning of the year and again in November – resulted in an enormous loss of life, and reminded the world that the forces of terror remain a significant threat. Within the borders of the United States, mass shootings in Charleston, South Carolina; Roseburg, Oregon; Chattanooga, Tennessee; Colorado Springs, Colorado; and San Bernardino, California shook the nation to its core as far too many innocent lives were taken. Missouri and the rest of the nation also dealt with the fallout from global events as the White House initiated a plan to allow 10,000 Syrian refugees into the country. Missouri and many other states continue to fight efforts to relocate refugees within their borders until the federal government can ensure none of the immigrants pose a security risk.

The year 2015 also produced unexpected changes in leadership in both the Missouri House and Senate. On the House side, Floor Leader Todd Richardson took over as House Speaker after the former Speaker resigned due to an inappropriate relationship with an intern. On the Senate side, Floor Leader Ron Richard ascended to the top position after President Pro Tem Tom Dempsey vacated his seat to seek employment outside the building. As 2016 is set to begin, members from both chambers have rallied to support their new leaders and are set to work together to advance an aggressive legislative agenda that will move Missouri toward a brighter tomorrow.

2015 Comes to a Close with Dangerous Flooding

Rather than a white Christmas, Missourians saw the holiday season produce record levels of rainfall that led to flooding throughout the state. Already the overflowing rivers and streams have taken the lives of 13 Missourians and have led to hundreds more being evacuated. The heavy rains and flooding led Governor Nixon to declare a state of emergency, and to activate the National Guard to support Missouri communities and assist first responders.

Fortunately, the forecast now calls for no heavy rain in the next several days, which should allow the flood waters to recede. However, officials continue to warn all Missourians to continue to use extreme caution when encountering water-covered roads.

The governor urged residents of flood-affected areas of Missouri to pay close attention to weather warnings and follow the safety instructions of local officials as the potential for additional

dangerous flooding continues. Missourians, especially motorists, are encouraged to remember these important safety tips on flooding and high water:

Do not walk through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.

Do not drive into flooded areas. If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle can be quickly swept away. Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars, causing loss of control and possible stalling.

A foot of water will float many vehicles. Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles, including sport utility vehicles and pick-ups. Even if the water appears shallow enough to cross, don't try it. Water hides dips in the road. Worse yet, there may be no road at all under the water. Flooding can scour away the entire road surface and a significant amount of ground beneath.

Missourians who need disaster information, shelter information, and referrals are urged to call 211. The 211 service is now available throughout Missouri.

Congressman Jason Smith had arranged a community town hall meeting with the Corps of Engineers on the afternoon of the 31st. State Senator Doug Libla, State Representatives Holly Rehder and Don Rone as well as myself attended this meeting. In attendance there were also many other local community leaders present. The Corp, per their statements at this meeting, do not feel they will be activating the floodway at the current flood stages and predictions. I will continue to monitor this situation closely, if you have any issues with the flooding, please do not hesitate to contact my office, if we cannot provide the assistance we will find who can!

Legislature Set to Look at Real ID Issue

The State of Missouri recently was notified by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that driver's licenses issued in Missouri will not be considered valid forms of identification by federal facilities. The notification has set leaders in both the House and Senate into motion to develop a compromise or fix that will ensure Missourians do not have issues in the future with boarding an airplane. For now, the federal government's decision to not recognize Missouri driver's licenses will only prevent license holders from using that ID to enter a federal facility such as a military base. However, both House Speaker Richardson and Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard have said they want to act quickly to develop a solution that will protect Missourians from any inconvenience or loss of access or services.

It was in 2009 that Missouri passed legislation to prevent changes proposed by the federal Real ID Program. Specifically, the bill prohibits the state revenue department from changing the procedures for applying for a driver's license to comply with the federal act. Real ID was approved by Congress in 2005 in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The goal was to create minimum standards for government-issued identification. However, several states joined Missouri in rejecting what they saw as an attempt to create a national identification card.

Now, lawmakers will look for a compromise solution that will honor the spirit of the 2009 law, but also ensure Missourians don't have to face additional hurdles when traveling.

Until Next Week,

Tila

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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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