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Senator Doug Libla's Capitol Report

MARCH 14TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Senator Doug Libla's Capitol Report

Recently, the Missouri Senate debated several meaningful pieces of legislation that are sure to not only bring high paying jobs, but also protect countless Missouri children. Two of those bills were top priorities of mine for the 2018 legislative session, Senate Bill 894 and Senate Bill 800 were bills I filed, and both were passed.

Senate Bill 894 establishes new computer science standards to include coding and programming along with guidelines designed for K-12 schools. This will encourage more Missouri students to study computer science by allowing the course to count toward high school graduation. Computer science job skills are in demand across our state and country. This program will teach our youth the skills they need for the 21st century job market. The bill also creates a certification program for computer science teachers as well as introduces an online program that showcases STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) careers and their impact on today's economy.

Senate Bill 800 shortens the length of time a child spends in foster care. Under the current system, there can be a lag between when a petition to terminate parental rights is filed and when an adoption petition is filed. Senate Bill 800 allows both the petition for adoption and the petition to terminate parental rights to be filed together. The journey for many of our children in Missouri's current foster care system takes far too long. Sadly, many of the delays are caused by prolonged legal proceedings. Statics indicate that older children are less likely to be adopted than younger children. I am hopeful this bill will become law this year, and help these children find their way into loving forever homes, as quickly as possible.

After some debate, Senate Bill 800 and Senate Bill 894, were approved and sent to the Missouri House of Representatives for final approval. The Missouri General Assembly will take a one-week spring break beginning March 19th. Upon returning, bills and proposals will begin to move quickly through the legislative process before the end of the legislative session.

More great news, Magnitude 7 Metals plans to bring many good paying jobs back to our area. The opening of the new aluminum smelter gives New Madrid County and the Bootheel hope that better times are ahead. Some of the poorest counties in Missouri are in the Bootheel and these quality, high paying jobs will greatly benefit the community.

I welcome you to visit your State Capitol and stop by our office (room 219), or call (573-751-4843) with any questions, concerns or comments you may have. I am honored to serve the citizens of the 25th District.

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Congressman Jason Smith Protects MO Families with Wood Burning Stoves

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Rep. Smith Protects Missouri Families with Wood Burning Stoves

Smith's legislation stops Obama-era regulation that put harmful restrictions on how Missourians heat homes

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Rep. Smith's legislation to protect Missouri families who use wood burning stoves to heat their homes passed the U.S. House of Representatives. H.R. 453 delays the Obama-era emission regulations for residential wood and pellet stoves, hydronic heaters, and forced-air furnaces by three years. In addition to championing the three-year delay for wood heater regulations, Smith is working with the Trump Administration to get a full and permanent repeal.

“Obama's EPA consistently wrote rules like this one that disproportionately hurt rural Americans. They singlehandedly decided that 12 million wood-burning stoves in 2.4 million households across America needed to be regulated because of Washington-driven, bureaucrat emissions standards,” Congressman Smith said. “Fortunately, with President Trump in office, the war on rural America is finally over.”

H.R. 453 was attached to the Kilns Act, and passed the House of Representatives by 234-180 with bipartisan support on March 7, 2019. It will now be considered by the U.S. Senate.

“Delaying this rule is going to be a big help for folks back home. The bottom line is, Missourians should not be punished for their self-reliance and their forethought to take advantage of an abundant, eco-friendly fuel like wood,” said Congressman Smith. “In fact, a given home in our district is five times more likely to be heated with wood than the national average. Fifty-seven percent of households who primarily use wood for heat are in rural areas, 40 percent are in the suburbs and only 3 percent in urban areas.”

Craig Bohnsack of Jackson, MO said, “This legislation will provide relief to me and my extended retail stores throughout the Midwest who are proud to sell clean-burning, affordable wood and pellet stoves. Extra time will allow manufacturers to develop user-friendly products that provide heat and reliability to southeast Missouri families.”

Bohnsack is the CEO of Kasten Masonry Sales, Inc. which is based in Southeast Missouri and sells wood burning stoves to thousands of families in the area. Their stores are located in Cape Girardeau, Jackson and Bonne Terre.

This is not the first time Smith’s legislation on wood fired stoves has passed the U.S. House of Representatives. In December of 2015, the House of Representatives passed Congressman Smith’s amendment to eliminate regulations on wood stoves by a bipartisan vote of 247-177. According to Smith, due to inaction in the Senate, legislation from the House of Representatives must be revisited frequently.

“Unfortunately, you’ve got a Senate full of obstructionists that won’t act quickly. I’ve been able to pass protections for Missourians who heat their homes with wood in the past, only to see the efforts stall out in the Senate,” said Congressman Smith. “But, I believe President Trump is going to make a real difference this time around. Under his leadership, we are slashing Obama-era regulations at a rate of 22:1.”

According to Smith, about 30,000 households in the 8th District use wood heat to warm their homes. Smith also said that heating with wood grew 34 percent between 2000 and 2010, and that low and middle-income households are more likely to use wood as a primary heating fuel.

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U.S. Rep. Smith Works with White House, Employer to bring 450 Jobs to the Bootheel

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[Smith joins Governor Greitens, Rep. Don Rone, to announce opening of Magnitude 7 Metals in New Madrid](#)

NEW MADRID, MO – Congressman Jason Smith co-hosted a public event in the bootheel today where he made a major jobs announcement. Along with Governor Greitens and State Rep. Done Rone, Smith formally announced the opening of Magnitude 7 Metals in New Madrid and with it, an estimated 450 new jobs for the area.

“In my meetings with President Trump and my work with his Administration, I have noticed a major change... the war on rural America is over,” said Congressman Smith. “We’ve passed major tax cuts, repealed regulations at historic rates and lowered energy prices. Now, with the President’s commitment to new, fairer trade deals, we are bringing back the domestic aluminum and steel industries and with it, jobs. Over the last several months we have set the stage for the comeback of the domestic aluminum industry – we removed over \$8 billion worth of regulatory costs on the economy which were holding back investments and we slashed the highest business tax rate found anywhere in the industrialized world. We made the changes needed to our economy to ensure employers felt welcomed and wanted to hire in rural America...not fearful of the next tax, the next regulation and the next penalty the government would hit them with,” continued Smith.

Smith is the only member of the Missouri Congressional Delegation on the powerful tax-writing committee in Congress, The Ways and Means Committee, and was instrumental in writing and passing the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Smith was also at the White House with President Trump twice last month to discuss fair trade and how to revive America's aluminum and steel industries.

“Rural America is open for business. From Washington to Missouri, what we are announcing today is the result of years of hard work and a major change in the way employers and farmers are treated, said Congressman Smith. “We have successfully repealed harmful Obama-era rules and business-killing regulations, reduced the highest tax burden in the industrialized world, lowered energy prices and are once again negotiating fair deals to benefit the American worker.”

In addition to advocating for southeast Missouri in meetings with the President, Smith has a strong record of fighting for domestic aluminum production. In 2016, Smith led a bipartisan initiative that called for an investigation of factors affecting the global competitiveness of the U.S. aluminum industry, including overproduction and subsidies in other countries. Smith stood with President Trump in the Oval Office in 2017 to sign the order expediting the conclusions of that study which were subsequently released in February 2018 and showed the impact unfair foreign practices have had on the American aluminum industry. This week the White House announced the implementation of several measures to protect the domestic aluminum and steel worker from unfair trade practices of American competitors.

Congressman Smith concluded, “In 2012, we imported 66% of the aluminum we consumed, in 2016 that number was 90%. Over a similar period the number of U.S. Aluminum smelters went from 15 to 2 while China's share of the global aluminum market soared from 10% to 55%...I called on the Obama Administration to investigate the actions and overproduction in China, they dragged their feet. Then we elected Donald Trump. Within his first few months, President Trump called me into office and demanded his Administration investigate and recommend how to fix the fact that China was cheating the American Aluminum worker. I know with a level and fair playing field, the domestic aluminum industry can be viable once again. Earlier this week, the White House gave us that chance. They imposed new protections for the American Aluminum and Steel industries to ensure that when other countries cheat on trade, we will punch back, and punch back we did. As you can see today, there is no better place than right here in southern Missouri for a comeback of the domestic aluminum industry,” said Congressman Smith. “Governor Greitens has been instrumental in the process as well. Together, we have created an environment where folks want to invest.”

“After the closure of the aluminum smelter in Marston, hundreds of people worked with us to send a clear message: They don’t want welfare. They want to work. They want to bring back American jobs,” said Governor Eric Greitens. “We all fought hard to pass a bill to help us compete for these jobs and advanced manufacturing jobs around the state. Today, jobs are coming back and good people will be going back to work. This announcement is the result of a lot of hard work by a lot of people. I’m proud to welcome Magnitude 7 Metals to Marston, so they can bring quality jobs back to this region.”

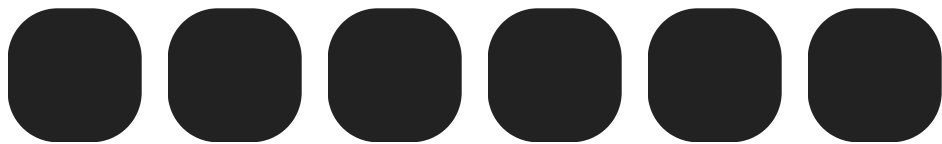
Smith also worked with State Rep. Don Rone who represents New Madrid.

“The high paying jobs that will be created by reopening this facility will bring hope and stability to families across who for too long have been out of work,” Missouri Representative Don Rone said. “The effects of this news will ripple not only throughout our region, but across generations.”

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Senator Doug Libla Joins Other Lawmakers to Announce New Aluminum Smelter

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Senator Doug Libla Joins Other Lawmakers to Announce New Aluminum Smelter

Jefferson City, Missouri - Senator Doug Libla, R-Poplar Bluff, invites citizens and media from Missouri's Bootheel to attend an announcement regarding the opening of a new aluminum smelter in New Madrid County.

“Our local communities have been struggling since the loss of Noranda, I am happy to announce that Magnitude 7 Metals plans to bring many good paying jobs back to our area. Along with our highly-skilled workforce, this announcement gives our region hope that better times are ahead,” Sen. Libla said. “When the smelter closed in 2016, approximately 900 people lost their jobs. The new smelter and the new jobs are great news for New Madrid County and the Bootheel.”

WHO: Sen. Doug Libla and other state and local lawmakers

WHAT: Magnitude 7 Aluminum Smelter Opening Announcement

WHEN: 2 p.m., Friday, March 9

WHERE: St. Jude Industrial Park in New Madrid County

This event is open to the public.

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U.S. Rep. Smith Stands with White House to Support U.S. Aluminum Industry

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U.S. Rep. Smith Stands with White House to Support U.S. Aluminum Industry
White House announces new planned protections for U.S. Aluminum after months of working with Smith and industry leaders

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Rep. Smith congratulated the White House on the President’s plans to place new trade protections for domestically made aluminum and steel, helping to bring back thousands of American jobs in those industries. Specifically, President Trump announced his intent to crack down and reduce foreign aluminum imports flooding the U.S. markets with new trade enforcement measures. The President’s announcement followed the recommendations of Smith who was at the White House as recently as Tuesday discussing this issue. Smith also met with President Trump at the White House earlier in February to discuss what can be done to support the U.S. aluminum industry.

“I am proud I could help President Trump come to a decision and take action to rejuvenate the American aluminum industry,” said Congressman Smith. “With the President’s leadership, the aluminum industry in places like the Bootheel can be poised for a comeback.”

Smith has a strong record of fighting for domestic aluminum production. In 2016, Smith led a bipartisan initiative that called for an investigation of factors affecting the global competitiveness of the U.S. aluminum industry, including overproduction and subsidies in other countries. Smith stood with President Trump in the Oval Office in 2017 to sign the order expediting the conclusions of that study which were subsequently released in February 2018 and showed the impact unfair foreign practices have had on the American aluminum industry.

“I have been pushing for the needed changes in U.S. trade policy, the needed regulatory relief and changes to our tax code because I know the domestic aluminum industry can be viable once again, and there is no better place than right here in southern Missouri,” said Congressman Smith.

In 2000, there were 22 aluminum smelters in the United States, and now there are only two fully operational facilities left. Noranda Aluminum in New Madrid was one of those forced to close. In that same time period, China’s share of worldwide aluminum smelting market has grown from 11 percent to now 55 percent.

“Watching the Bootheel lose more than 900 good-paying jobs was flat out heartbreaking,” said Congressman Smith. “Even worse was knowing that an unfair playing field and over production in China were major contributing factors. But I am encouraged by President Trump’s efforts. Actions like the one he announced planning to take today are the start of revitalizing and reinvigorating the American aluminum industry.”

“American manufacturers are ready to compete, but we have to make sure the playing field is level,” said Congressman Smith. “President Trump’s announcement is a strong step forward that will stop foreign countries’ unfair trade practices and create a level playing field for our hard-working American aluminum manufacturers.”

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