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Blunt Talks Rural Broadband with Missouri Electric Cooperatives

APRIL 12TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Blunt Talks Rural Broadband with Missouri Electric Cooperatives

Washington D.C. - This week, U.S. Senator Roy Blunt (Mo.), a member of the Senate Commerce Committee, spoke to Missouri Electric Cooperatives during their trip to Washington. Blunt released the following statement after the meeting:

“Access to broadband is an issue that impacts virtually every Missourian. It’s critical for students to do their homework, businesses to grow, hospitals to treat patients, and farmers to meet growing world food demand. In 2018, it’s unacceptable that more than 50 percent of rural Missourians currently lack access to broadband. I’m committed to working to end the digital divide and help every area of our state, particularly our rural communities, compete and succeed.”

The government spending bill, which was signed into law last month, provides \$600 million for a new rural broadband pilot grant and loan program. This program will target areas that do not have access to broadband, and includes provisions to prevent overbuilding.

As a member of the Commerce Committee, Blunt has pressed the need to expand rural broadband, noting that an increasing number of farmers are utilizing wireless infrastructure, GPS, data centers, autonomous systems, and fiber optics for precision agriculture and high-speed commodity trading.

Last year, Blunt urged the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to act on \$2 billion in funds available for rural broadband, and to open this money up to auction so new entrants in this field, like electrical cooperatives, could competitively bid. Following Blunt’s letter, the FCC did so, and the Commission subsequently considered a notice to initiate the pre-auction process for this money to deploy fiber optics in rural parts of Missouri.

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Rep. Smith Honored for Cutting Taxes, Reducing Regulations, and Fighting for Small Businesses

APRIL 12TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Rep. Smith Honored for Cutting Taxes, Reducing Regulations and Fighting for Small Businesses

Smith receives award from Chamber of Commerce for strong record of fighting for American workers

Cape Girardeau, Missouri - Today, at the Cape Girardeau Chamber of Commerce First Friday Coffee, Congressman Jason Smith received the Spirit of Enterprise Award from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for his strong record of fighting for small businesses, cutting taxes and encouraging job growth. The Spirit of Enterprise award is reserved for Members of Congress who cast important votes and advance policy measures that will help grow the economy and bring jobs back to America.

“It’s great to be recognized for your work, but for me, the true reward in all of this is seeing Missouri businesses thrive,” said Congressman Smith. “With President Trump’s leadership, we’ve seen energy rates drop, cut taxes on small businesses to historic lows and repealed over a thousand burdensome regulations that were dragging businesses down, increasing costs and requiring thousands of hours of paperwork.”

Rep. Smith’s tax cuts bill brought \$5.5 trillion in tax cuts for American farmers, employers, and workers. Additionally, through his work with the Trump Administration, Smith has been able to remove over \$8.1 billion in regulatory costs from the economy. Furthermore, since President Trump was inaugurated, Americans’ confidence in the economy has gone up, and the number of people filing for unemployment has dropped to a 45-year low.

“The economy is booming and rural America is finally open for business again,” said Smith. “In the first year of the Trump Administration, over 1.6 million new jobs were created and the unemployment rate fell to 4.1 percent, the lowest in 17 years.”

After receiving the Spirit of Enterprise Award, Smith addressed the crowd of 200 chamber members in attendance and discussed how, in addition to record low unemployment, many people are bringing home more money in each paycheck.

“Not only are businesses hiring more people and passing along the benefit of tax cuts through bonuses, higher wages and better benefits, but all Missourians are now able to keep more of what they make rather than send that money to Washington because of the new tax cuts law,” said Congressman Smith. “The bottom line is, folks in Missouri are some of the hardest working people around, and they shouldn’t be turning over their hard-earned money to government bureaucrat.”

Smith's tax cuts legislation was signed into law by President Trump in December 2017. Since then, more than 430 companies nationwide have announced pay raises, bonuses or increased retirement contributions that are benefitting more than 4 million Americans. Furthermore, more than \$4 billion in bonuses have been distributed as a direct result of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. In addition, all workers, families and farmers are now seeing more money in their pocket as a result of tax rates going down on all individuals.

This is the fourth time Smith has received the Spirit of Enterprise Award for standing with American workers and small businesses as he represents Southern Missouri in Congress. Congressman Smith is the only member of the Missouri Congressional Delegation on the tax writing committee, The Committee on Ways and Means, and was instrumental in writing and passing the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Smith also worked directly with the President Trump transition team to help identify a regulatory repeal agenda which was essential to rolling back many Obama-era regulations such as Waters of the United States.

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Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Learning and Serving

APRIL 08TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Learning and Serving

Congressman Smith Capitol Report Learning and Serving April 6, 2018

Every year, I am honored to have the privilege of nominating outstanding young men and women from southern Missouri for appointment to our nation's finest service academies. In the spring, I am overcome with emotion when calling many of the same students to tell them they have been admitted to one of our nation's prestigious service academies.

Earlier this spring I traveled to West Point and had the opportunity to visit with the cadets I have nominated in recent years and as well as other cadets from Missouri. We had lunch together and they told me about their academy experience and what they were looking forward to doing next – serving their country. Lucas Manion from Park Hills, Taylor Brooks from Dora, Garrett Manley from Marston, Malachi Leece from Webb City, Chris Radford from Bourbon, Parker Petersen from Kirksville and Kalen Kahn from Bonne Terre, while unique and inspirational each in their own way, together they represent the same shared vision of service before self, emboldened by the motto which unites them, "This We'll Defend." While getting one of the best educations in the world, these young men will have the honor of serving the best country in the world. Their dedication to America is inspiring and one of the many reasons they have been appointed to such prestigious schools.

I also had the opportunity to pause and remember Tom Surdyke, a brave Missourian and West Point cadet I had the privilege of nominating in 2015. Tom selflessly sacrificed his own life to save the life of a drowning civilian while on a vacation with friends just before the start of his sophomore year at West Point. He embodied service and put others before himself even in his last moments on earth.

By air, land and sea, the U.S. Armed Services have defended America's freedoms and fought bravely for our rights as an independent nation. Our service academies set demanding academic and physical standards that ensure the continuity of our troops and produce exceptional officers to lead our military.

Most recently, I had the privilege of congratulating a new class of four Missourians on their appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the Air Force Academy and the Naval Academy.

Jonathan “J.T.” Meinke from Jackson received an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and was honored during a ceremony at Jackson High School this week. And John “J.P.” Schuchardt from Cape Girardeau, who will attend the U.S. Naval Academy this Fall, was recognized during a ceremony at my office in Cape Girardeau. I also want to congratulate Wyatt Murphy from Poplar Bluff and Christopher Steward from Campbell who have both accepted their appointments to the U.S. Air Force Academy.

Only the most outstanding and dedicated young men and women are admitted to these institutions. These young adults have proved their leadership abilities and academic prowess at home and earned a spot to study and serve with the brightest at our nation’s service academies. They are now standing out as leaders among their peers at West Point, the Air Force Academy and the Naval Academy.

I’m so proud of each and every one of Missouri’s service academy appointees. As you say a prayer for our Missouri cadets and all those from Missouri serving in the Armed Forces, know their futures are bright. Be proud that these talented young men and women will continue to excel in their military careers and that they are leading in the fight to keep our country safe and secure.

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Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Fighting for the Farm

APRIL 04TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Fighting for the Farm

Congressman Smith Capitol Report
Fighting for the Farm
March 23, 2018

As a fourth-generation family farm owner, I know just how important agricultural operations are to Missouri's economy and our rural communities. Missouri farmers are some of the hardest working people around, and it's a privilege to represent them in the United States Congress. Whether you grow corn or cotton, raise cattle or pigs or run one of the many other ag operations across our great state, your hard work not only feeds and clothes Americans, but millions of other families around the world. This week, through National Agriculture Week, we recognize the dedication, strength and perseverance of the American farmer.

In the summer of 2016, when visiting the countless farm operations which call southern Missouri home, the number one concern I heard from folks was about how the aggressive regulatory agenda from the Obama Administration was hurting the ability to farm one's land, to provide for their family and to continue family operations which had been in practice for generations. Whether it be trying to prevent their own kids from working on their farm, keeping farm equipment off of rural roads, trying to regulate every bucket of water on a farm or treating spilled cow's milk like the '89 Exxon Valdez accident – Missouri farmers were being crushed under a regulatory agenda which severely tied their hands and hampered their ability to operate.

Before he was even inaugurated, President Trump and his team took an interest in hearing how they could provide regulatory relief to rural America. I sat down with his team and explained the regulations that were most harming Missouri farming operations. Within his first months of office President Trump repealed many of those regulations and has continued to remove more each and every day. As a matter of fact, he has removed over 1000 regulations, saving our economy over \$8 billion in regulatory costs. Missouri farmers deserve to work day in and day out on their land, not worrying about some regulation written by an out of touch Washington bureaucrat who has never set foot in our home state or on a farm.

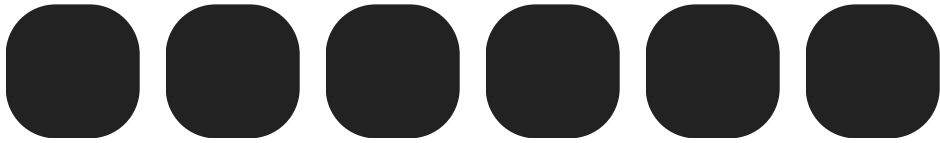
But more than just regulations, many of our farmers are faced with some of the highest tax burdens found anywhere in the world. Last year, I traveled with the President twice to Missouri to talk about how we could deliver real tax cuts and real tax relief to the thousands of Missouri farm families who make a living off the land. I talked to the President about how our farmers needed expensing relief to know they could deduct that next piece of equipment right away, how we needed to make sure our farmers could continue to use a cash basis accounting and how the unfair death tax was punishing farming families who were simply trying to keep their operation going from one generation to the next. We talked about how we needed to lower rates on farmers and simplify the filing process so they could spend more time in their fields and with their families than worry about calculating every receipt. After making frequent trips to the White House, going to hundreds of meetings with my colleagues on the tax-writing committee and making countless late night phone calls to get the President's opinion on the tax cuts bill, we were able to deliver real tax relief to Missouri families and farmers with the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, signed into law last December.

By reducing regulations, cutting taxes, and creating a fair playing field for farmers, we've made it possible for rural America to come roaring back to life. For only the second time in the last century, the number of farmers under 35 has actually gone up and in 2017, rural job creation accounted for a larger share of overall job creation than ever before. With the President's leadership, we have been able to deliver tax cuts for American farmers, put more money back in Missourians pockets, reduce federal regulations, drive down energy prices and grow the economy to bring jobs back to rural America.

During National Agriculture Week, and every other week of the year, it is a real privilege for me to support Missouri's biggest industry and serve as their voice in Congress. As we continue to work on behalf of rural America, I know we can deliver on even more policy wins for the hardest working folks in America, our farmers, and make it easier for them to do what they do best... feed and clothe the world.

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Blunt Celebrates Easter in Afghanistan with Airmen from Whiteman Air Force Base

APRIL 04TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Blunt Celebrates Easter in Afghanistan with Airmen from Whiteman Air Force Base](#)

WASHINGTON - U.S. Senator Roy Blunt (Mo.) released the following statement today after his trip to Kandahar, Afghanistan, where he spent the Easter weekend with Airmen from the 442nd Fighter Wing deployed out of Whiteman Air Force Base.

“I could not be more proud of the Airmen from Whiteman Air Force Base who are putting their lives on the line and sacrificing time with their families to keep our country safe,” said Blunt. “The Airmen who are deployed to Afghanistan with the 442nd are playing a pivotal role in the fight against the Taliban. I’m grateful for their service, and for all of our military men and women who are carrying out dangerous and difficult missions across

the globe.”

The U.S. Air Force deployed the A-10 Thunderbolt jets to Afghanistan in January to provide close air support and precision strike capacity for a variety of efforts, including counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism efforts against the Taliban.

Last month, Blunt announced that funding for A-10 wing replacement was included in the recently-enacted government funding bill for this year. Blunt previously traveled to Estonia in September 2015 when the A-10s were deployed in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve.

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