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# Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - A Week for American Job Creators

MAY 07TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - A Week for American Job Creators

**Congressman Smith Capitol Report  
A Week for American Job Creators  
May 4, 2018**

The comeback of rural America, ignited in large part by a President who understands that we are more than just flyover country on the way to Hollywood, has been joined in recent months with new optimism from American small businesses. Whether it be a result of reducing the federal tax burden, slashing thousands of regulations which were tying up valuable business resources and employee time, or a change in the overall atmosphere from one which wants to punish American entrepreneurs to one which wants to reward them, small businesses across the U.S. are thriving. This week we pause to reflect on the importance of these small businesses and their contribution to our economy during American Small Business Week.

As the American economy comes roaring back, the importance of small businesses, defined as those with less than 500 employees, can't be overstated. Small businesses jobs account for half of all those in the U.S. and are rising – in fact two out of every three new jobs in this country come directly from a small business. These are the family owned and run operations where the owners sweat, equity and risk taking often keeps them awake each night.

I was fortunate this week to visit several thriving small businesses across southern Missouri to hear about their operations and what I can be working on to help them succeed. Mike Roberts, owner of Mansfield Building Supply in Wright County showed me his business and discussed the logistics of operating additional stores in Ava, Gainesville and Seymour. He talked to me about rising confidence from consumers and suppliers with President Trump in the White House; a marked difference from the last eight years where they didn't know which Washington regulation they would be socked with next.

It's simple, with a cut in taxes, massive regulatory relief, and an improving business climate, small businesses are once again investing, hiring and expanding. Unemployment is at 3.9%, a 17 year low and wages are up almost 3%, their highest year to year in 10 years. Most recently, the National Federation of Independent Business shared that optimism amongst small businesses was at some of the highest points in the last 45 years. They also reported that pay increases from small business owners to employees was at its highest level since the turn of the century, with many other owners planning new job creation announcements.

When Washington over regulates, when Washington over taxes – it is the American small business owner who disproportionately carries that burden. With few employees, compliance costs cannot be distributed and hours and money which could be spent growing ones business are instead spent on filling out paperwork for a Washington bureaucrat. Something has gone off the tracks when business expansion plans have to be put on hold because it is more complex to complete your stack of 1099 forms or the latest reporting requirement from the IRS. That is where we were. But for the last 17 months, I have worked under the leadership of a President who wants to correct that wrong, who has slashed taxes, removed over 1,000 regulations and whose committing to doing more. Our work isn't done, but with unemployment down, wages up and businesses ready to invest and grow, we know we are on the right path.

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## U.S. Rep. Smith Announces Congressional Art Competition Winner

MAY 03RD 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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### **U.S. Rep. Smith Announces Congressional Art Competition Winner**

Smith congratulates finalists and announces winner, Avery Coffman with “St. Jude Chapel Montauk, MO”

Cape Girardeau, Missouri - Congressman Jason Smith congratulated Congressional Art Competition finalists and announced the winner during a reception at the Southeast Missouri State University River Campus on Monday evening. Avery Coffman, a Senior from Salem R-80 won the 8th Congressional District Competition with a work of the St. Jude Chapel in Montauk, MO. The piece was completed by burning a drawing of the church into a piece of wood.

“Avery’s piece really stood out to me. I have never seen anything like it and was really amazed by what she was able to do,” said Congressman Smith. Her work will look great in the hallways of the United States Capitol and I look forward to educating my colleagues on what her piece represents and how she completed it. Millions of visitors to our Nation’s Capital will now be able to view her work”

The work of the St. Jude Chapel will be displayed in the United States Capitol for a full year and Avery will receive two round trip tickets to Washington, D.C. to attend the

Congressional Art Competition reception with other art competition winners from across the country.

There were six finalists in total from across southern Missouri. They were:

Alexis VanHoosier, 12th Grade, Farmington R-7  
Emilia Torres, 11th Grade, Farmington R-7

Avery Coffman, 12th Grade, Salem R-80  
Marlene Schuh, 11th Grade, Salem R-80

Rylie Nicole Coats, 9th Grade, West Plains High School

Sophie Bollinger, 12th Grade, Perryville High School

The evening started with Congressman Smith receiving a painting from 3rd grader Layla Burgfeld of Blanchard Elementary titled “Neon Puppy” (\*attached photo\*) and will be displayed in the Congressional office located in Cape Girardeau.

Smith also spent time speaking with finalists Sophie Bollinger of Perryville High School and Emilia Torres of Farmington. Bollinger intends to pursue art after graduation while Emilia plans to compete again in the Congressional Art Competition next year.

“All of these kids are so talented and I am honored that they are willing to display those talents through this friendly competition,” said Congressman Smith. “They are all going places and have big plans, but I know they will continue to be inspired by and hold close their roots here in southern Missouri.”

The Congressional Art Competition is an annual event for high school students held each spring.

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## Blunt Opens Application Process for Missourians Seeking to Attend Service Academies

MAY 02ND 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Blunt Opens Application Process for Missourians Seeking to Attend Service Academies

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Roy Blunt (Mo.) this week announced that he is accepting applications to service academies from interested Missourians. Nominations to the U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, U.S. Military Academy, and U.S. Naval Academy are available for qualified applicants.

“Service academies play a critical role in educating and inspiring the next generation of servicemen and women,” said Blunt. “These institutions improve leadership skills, build character, and offer invaluable opportunities for young Missourians who decide to pursue a career in our nation’s military.”

Applicants must be between 17 and 23 years of age, U. S. citizens, and legal residents of Missouri. A committee of Missouri residents will review applicants’ files and present their recommendations to Senator Blunt for a formal nomination in January. Nominees will be evaluated using the “equal and competitive” method for selection and on the basis of personal merit including, evidence of character, leadership, scholarship, and motivation.

Interested applicants can apply via a secure website, which will allow them to continually check the status of their application. The link to the application can be found on the

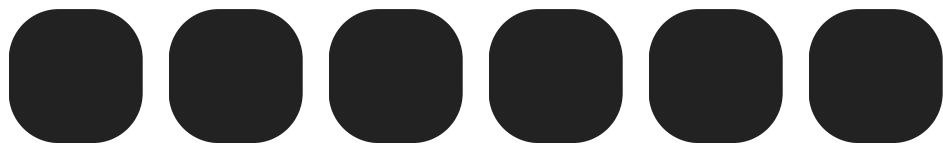
Academy Application Process page of [www.blunt.senate.gov](http://www.blunt.senate.gov). All application materials must be received on or before October 4, 2018.

The academy nomination process requires that students first open an application directly with the academies of their choice and then begin the nomination process with their congressional offices. For more information please contact Senator Blunt's office at [academy\\_nominations@blunt.senate.gov](mailto:academy_nominations@blunt.senate.gov).

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## Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Error: Filing Currently Unavailable

APRIL 23RD 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

**Congressman Smith Capitol Report**  
**Error: Filing Currently Unavailable**  
**April 20, 2018**

Millions of American's frustration with an outdated, broken and unfair tax code was met symbolically on Tuesday with news that their attempts to file their taxes online was currently 'unavailable' and that they should 'come back on Dec. 31, 9999.'" That's right, the old, clunky and broken tax code – broke the IRS website. Frustrated Missourians who had spent hours trying to do what's right, trying to comply with their tax obligations before the stated deadline, couldn't even do so because once again, government had failed them.

The good news is that it's finally over. This marks the last year you will have to file under the old and outdated tax system – as a result of President Trump signing the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act into law late last year, the new tax code he and I both authored will be in full effect when filing day returns one year from now. With it will come an easier process, one which is simpler, can be done on a single post card sized sheet of paper, and most important takes less money from you, your farm, your family or your business.

One of my biggest frustrations while serving as your voice in Congress has been watching unelected Washington bureaucrats, accountable to no one, spend spend spend taxpayer money with no consequences. Hand in hand with reducing the size and scope of your government, is reducing your tax burdens to allow you to keep more of what you make each year than send to Washington. It is my fundamental belief that you are the best steward of your valuable resources, that you know best how to save, invest and help grow your family and this economy – not someone who sits behind a desk in a federal agency all day and has never stepped foot in Missouri. In that same regard, I also don't think some politician whose latest idea to spend billions in taxpayer dollars to 'turn the economy around' will actually help our economy more than folks keeping more of their money and using their judgment to best benefit our economy. Simply put, you are best to make that decision, not your government.

Missourians are already benefiting from the new tax code, and getting rid of our antiquated filing process was the last step. Every single Missourian is operating under new tax withholding tables which are allowing them to keep more of each paycheck. In addition, wage increases, bonuses, increased benefits and retirement plus ups have been delivered to more than 4 million workers across the U.S. I visited some of those very

workers at the AT&T Call Center in Cape Girardeau, at the Tyson Plant in Dexter, at the Home Depot in Poplar Bluff, at the CVS in Sikeston and at Missouri Hardwoods Flooring in Birch Tree to hear directly from them about plans for additional investments in their company or new wage increases and benefits as a result of the tax cuts bill.

Next year's filing will be a simple process – lower and simpler taxes mean you keep more and you file less. With the Standard Deduction doubling to \$24,000 per married couple, over 30 million less filers will be burdened with itemizing out every deduction. According to the Tax Foundation – under the old tax system, people spent 2.6 billion hours in complying with their returns, that's a whole lot of lost time with your family, on your farm, or running your business – just to figure out how much you owed your government.

Making your government smaller, spending less and taxing less is a fight I will continue to wage. Saying goodbye to filing taxes under our old code was a major step, and one which ironically was met with even more government failure this week with the crashing of the tax filing system. But as we look forward to a new system which encourages businesses to hire and grow here in the U.S. and rewards folks for investing more in their family and free time than their government, I will continue the fight to make that same government work for you, and not the other way around.

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# Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - The Unbalanced Books

APRIL 16TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - The Unbalanced Books

**Congressman Smith Capitol Report**  
**The Unbalanced Books**  
**April 13, 2018**

Your farm cannot survive by spending more than you make, neither can your business nor your household - the truth is, neither can your government, but politicians seem disinterested in fixing that problem regardless of what the repercussions may be. Over \$21 trillion in debt and counting, that's what the current debt clock of the U.S. Government reads. Those are a heck of a lot of IOUs to the owners of American debt - your retirement accounts, the American taxpayer, businesses large and small, and foreign governments, especially the Chinese.

This is why when I first became your Member of Congress I introduced a bill that would require your federal government to operate with a balanced budget each and every year.

This week, The House of Representatives voted on that same proposal. Unfortunately, the vote failed as too many swamp creatures and politicians don't seem concerned with each and every U.S. taxpayer being strapped with \$174,000 in debt. They seem more concerned about throwing more taxpayer money at whatever special interest program or government boondoggle they think will help secure them more votes in the next election. They think giving more of your tax dollars, \$535 million to be exact, to defunct renewable energy companies like Solyndra is more important than reigning in out of control spending, or that spending \$5 million of your tax dollars in 2016 for the National Institute of Health to study if fraternities or sororities 'party more' (spoiler alert - the answer is fraternities, and I've never looked at the study) was more vital than our country's financial future.

With a balanced budget constitutional requirement, we would have ensured that Congress not spend any more than it takes in - something hard-working families in Missouri manage to do every day. We are living off credit right now, and it's not sustainable. In the words of Admiral Mike Mullen, "The most significant threat to our national security is our debt."

Before Easter, I cast one of the few NO votes on the \$1.3 trillion government spending bill. It spent too much without substantial cuts or reforms and was full of liberal spending priorities in order to secure more votes. That's not how your government should operate. Even President Trump lamented that we "had to waste money on Dem giveaways" to keep the government funded.

What's crazy to me is there are so many opportunities for our country to cut spending and save money. Want to save \$732 billion? Then give states more flexibility on Medicaid through block grants. Allow states to set the requirements best suited to fit the needs of their citizens, not a federal government one size fits all approach. To save \$21.7 billion, we should require a valid social security number for just one member of a household receiving tax breaks like the Earned Income Tax Credit. Another \$18 billion could be saved by cutting redundant and duplicative government programs.

One of the most effective ways to control wasteful government spending is through work requirements on welfare benefits. While unemployment rates under President Trump are at a record low, welfare enrollment among able-bodied adults is at a record high. We need to change our government welfare programs so that folks are rewarded for getting off the sidelines and back to work, not making more by passing on job openings or raises in order to continue to collect a government support check.

Your government should be just as serious and particular about how it spends your valuable taxpayer resources as you are in how you save and budget for your farm, your small business and your family. I fear the direction we are headed of massive, trillion-dollar government spending bills only further enabling trillion-dollar deficits. With a growing economy and unemployment falling, we have a great opportunity to slow the spicket of government spending, and I hope politicians will think about that the next time they decide to put special interest spending ahead of the needed action of balancing our nation's books.

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