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Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Thank You Veterans

NOVEMBER 12TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Thank You Veterans

Congressman Smith Capitol Report Thank You, Veterans November 9, 2018

This Sunday, November 11th is the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day, which marks the official end of World War I. Today we call the anniversary celebration Veterans' Day, but the meaning is the same – a day where our country expresses its sincere gratitude for everything our nation's veterans have done to defend us at home and protect our way of life.

Every veteran has sacrificed for you and me in one way or another. It's not just the physical sacrifice they endure in a grueling bootcamp, a tour of duty, or the wounds of war. The men and women who serve choose to give up priceless years of their lives for our country. It's the irreplaceable birthdays, wedding anniversaries, and family time they will never get back, all in the name of protecting the United States. They put their entire lives on hold to serve and leave their careers, family, and friends at home knowing there's a chance they may never return again.

Just as our veterans answered the call of duty to serve our nation, the duty is ours to support our veterans when their service ends. Almost every veteran I speak to has a story of how they were frustrated with the Department of Veterans Affairs at one point or

another. Some of the frustration was with the arbitrary 30-day and 40-mile distance requirements to seek care outside the VA, and that's why President Trump and I overhauled the VA system to make it easier for veterans to receive timely care outside the VA. Unfortunately like every government bureaucracy, in the past bad actors were able to hide behind government rules to stay employed at the VA. I was proud to be part of the team that sent a bill to President Trump that allows his administration to say "you're fired" to anyone who mistreated or neglected our veterans and didn't give them the care they deserve.

Any veteran or their family that needs help should look to my office as a resource. We assist veterans with the Department of Veterans Affairs, help families track down military records, and have made sure veterans in Missouri received medals that were supposed to be given to them long ago. Thanks to the 5,700 veterans who contacted my office, we successfully petitioned the Salem VA Clinic to expand their hours and the services they offer.

I'm proud that southern Missouri is a welcoming and supportive place where the 55,300 veterans who live here receive the respect and appreciation they deserve. In Cape Girardeau, the VFW creates the Avenue of Flags with an American flag for every veteran in the county who served our country. This year Perryville completed a full-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, and Piedmont hosted life-size replicas of Washington's veterans memorials so that the people of Missouri don't have to travel to D.C. to pay their respects. Local schools and businesses are showing their appreciation this weekend by offering free meals and ceremonies for veterans to honor their service. Southern Missouri's kindness to veterans can be seen in the numerous cities that have proclaimed themselves "Purple Heart Cities," and Poplar Bluff recently was honored as the first rural "Veteran Friendly Community" in Missouri, a distinction awarded by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

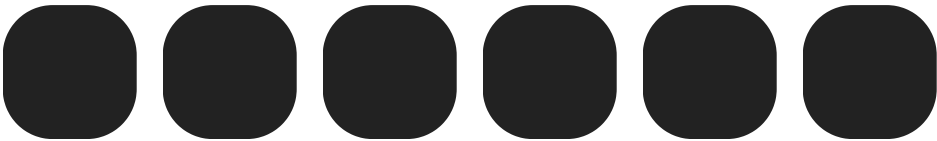
Whether it's at one of the parades, concerts, or events across southern Missouri, there are numerous ways to show your respect and pay tribute to veterans this weekend, and some creative ideas you may not have thought of. Hunters who take down a deer when hunting season starts this weekend can donate deer hides to the Elks Club in West Plains to be made into buckskin gloves for veterans in wheelchairs. President Trump's administration is waiving the fee for all public lands this Sunday, including the Ozarks National Scenic Riverways, because more than a third of America's national parks are battlefields, cemeteries, and sites that honor military veterans. And this week is also National Veteran's Small Business Week, which encourages another method of supporting our veterans at home: by giving patronage to veteran-owned businesses.

I’m humbled and inspired by all of the sacrifices our veterans make to protect our way of life at home. Adjustment back to civilian life is never seamless for those who serve, and the duty is ours to support them for everything they have given us. We’re blessed to live in the freest country that has ever existed on the face of the earth, and for that we should all thank a veteran.

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Proposition B Minimum Wage Increase Passes in Missouri

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Proposition B Minimum Wage Increase Passes in Missouri

Missouri voters overwhelmingly passed Proposition B to raise the state’s minimum wage to \$12 an hour by the year 2023.

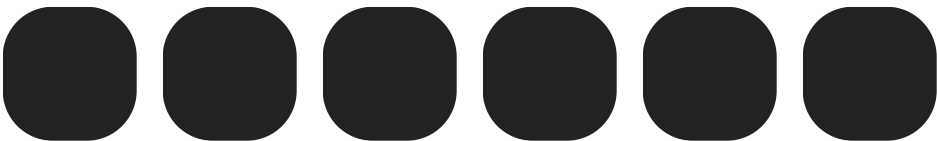
Proposition B will increase the state’s minimum wage from \$7.85 to \$8.60 an hour in 2019, and then by 85 cents each year until it reaches \$12 an hour in 2023.

"According to an analysis conducted the Economic Policy Institute, Proposition B will result in an increase of more than \$1 billion in consumer buying power in Missouri by the time it is fully phased in, affecting over 670,000 workers."

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Amendment 1 Passes to Clean Up Missouri Politics

NOVEMBER 07TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Amendment 1 Passes to Clean Up Missouri Politics

Amendment 1 passes to clean up Missouri politics
Republicans, Democrats, and Independents unite to take power away from special interests and give it to the people

A huge majority of Missourians voted Tuesday to clean up state politics by passing Amendment 1 to ban expensive lobbyist gifts, limit big money, require transparent records, and end gerrymandering.

“We are thrilled that Republicans, Democrats, and independents came together to clean up Missouri politics,” said Nimrod “Rod” Chapel, Jr, President of the NAACP Missouri State Chapter and Treasurer of Clean Missouri. “Thousands of Missourians from across the state came together to put Amendment 1 on the ballot, and then thousands more joined the fight to pass Amendment 1. It's truly a great day for Missouri.”

Amendment 1 will:

- +eliminate all lobbyist gifts in the General Assembly worth more than \$5

- +require that legislative meetings and records be open to the public

- +ensure that neither political party is given an unfair advantage when new maps are drawn after the next census, while keeping districts compact and contiguous, following city and county lines

- +when possible, and strengthening protections for minority representation

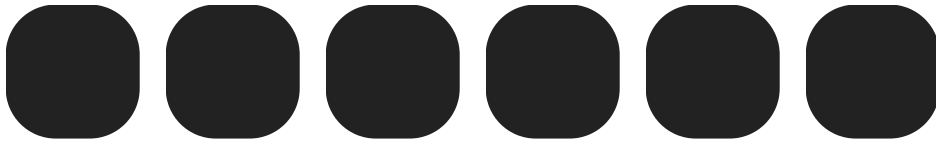
- +lower campaign contribution limits for state legislative candidates and close some big money loopholes

- +stop politicians from becoming lobbyists for 2 years after leaving the legislature

Provisions will take effect upon official certification of the results. The redistricting reform, requiring more fair and competitive maps, will be in effect when state legislative maps are next drawn, after the 2020 census. U.S. law requires new maps to be drawn after each census.

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Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Putting the Taxpayer in Charge

OCTOBER 23RD 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Putting the Taxpayer in Charge

Congressman Smith Capitol Report Putting the Taxpayer in Charge October 19, 2018

Missourians work hard day in and day out for their money, and they should have a government that watches over their dollars as carefully and responsibly as they do at home. We don't mind paying our fair share to live in a safe nation, to have a judicial system that maintains law and order, or for public infrastructure improvements. But in Missouri we don't have the appetite for a massive government that wants to use our hard-earned tax dollars on inefficient government programs and handouts. Your money belongs in your pocket, not in Washington's coffers.

President Ronald Reagan once said the most nine terrifying words in the English language are "I'm from the government, and I'm here to help." Too many families in Missouri know exactly what he meant by this, with an overbearing government that makes it harder to go about their lives, not easier. Raising a family, building a small business, and the freedom to work your land are the opportunities that make our country great. But 70,000 pages of the old tax code were stacked against working Missourians, full of loopholes and tax breaks designed to help special interests instead of families. That changed when President Trump and I wrote the *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act*, which lowered taxes for families, small businesses, and farms of all sizes

and allows a family of four to make up to \$55,000 tax free.

When we were writing the *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act*, the opposition showed a fundamental lack of respect for the taxpayer's time and hard work. To San Francisco millionaires like Nancy Pelosi, the largest tax cut in 30 years was 'crumbs.' They think the same way about raising taxes – taking more 'crumbs' here and there to pay for wasteful programs in faraway cities, with your family picking up the tab. I know that \$1,000 isn't crumbs to a rural Missouri family, and I know the pain that Washington creates when it raises taxes. When budgets have gotten too big, I've stood up to leaders in both parties to say enough is enough, we need to cut the spending.

The government should be as serious and responsible about spending taxpayer dollars as Missourians are about budgeting for their farms, small businesses, and families. The government shouldn't spend any more than it takes in, something Missouri families manage to do every day. I continue to advocate for a balanced budget requirement for federal government because the results of your hard work should grow our communities, not feed Washington's spending addiction. And if the government isn't working, elected officials shouldn't receive pay. That's why when Senate obstructionists prioritized illegal immigration over funding the government and forced a government shutdown earlier this year, I gave up my salary.

Too many people in Washington forget who is paying the bills and recklessly spend your money and write more rules. It is refreshing to work with a President who has a business background and understands the need to clean up the books and let the country get back to work. The Trump administration saved the economy \$23 billion in regulatory costs in the last year alone by getting rid of the most burdensome, unnecessary regulations. Without this burden on the economy Americans can add new jobs, expand businesses, and have an easier time creating new ones. I've authored and passed legislation to save millions of taxpayer dollars by scrubbing unnecessary regulations from the books and cutting red tape, and I support commonsense work requirements for government aid to rein in entitlement spending. That's why I am honored to have received the "Taxpayers' Friend Award" from the National Taxpayers Union.

If Washington exercised the same fiscal restraint Missourians do, our country would be much better off. President Trump and I have booted the bureaucrats and put taxpayers and job creators back in the driver's seat of the economy, and this week the United States became the most competitive economy in the world again for the first time since 2008. That's a taxpayer accomplishment, not a government one.

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Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Show-Me the Price

OCTOBER 17TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Show-Me the Price

**Congressman Smith Capitol Report
Show-Me the Price
October 12, 2018**

Information is power. Unfortunately, current rules and regulations are preventing you from having all the information you need when paying for certain prescription drugs. That's right, red tape and insider deals meant to benefit bottom lines are preventing your local pharmacy from being able to tell you if you could pay less for the same prescriptions. That all changed last week when President Trump signed into law a ban of "gag clauses," which had previously benefited health care industry insiders at the expense of Missouri families trying to care for loved ones.

At the start of this Congress, I held half a dozen public roundtables and heard directly from local doctors, patients, pharmacists, small business owners, and families who were all concerned about the rising costs of health care services. Premium prices have increased dramatically since Obamacare became law and fewer choices, if any, have been available where the Obamacare markets have failed. At our roundtables many people shared how very few choices they have in the health care market if at all, from their doctor, their premiums, or their prescriptions. Some of the barriers to competition are built in to the

health care system— since Obamacare has been law, fewer options are available, especially in rural areas. But some of these barriers are artificial, imposed by companies at the pharmacy, preventing the pharmacist from telling customers if cheaper prescription options are available.

I believe in free markets, where the consumer knows all of the products available to them and can make an informed decision that's best for the individual. 'Gag clauses' violate this key principle and cause Americans to pay more for the same prescriptions. By President Trump signing the Patient Right to Know Drug Prices Act and the Know the Lowest Price Act, we have banned 'gag clauses' in Medicare and the individual market and prevented insurance companies from concealing lower cost alternatives. Now you can know what options are available to you at the pharmacy and make the decision that is right for your wallet and your health.

Otherwise, allowing companies to ban pharmacists from informing customers moves us closer to the 'single-payer' government takeover of the health care system. President Trump and I want Americans to have the freedom of choice – to see the doctor that is right for them, to have the most affordable prescription options available, and the flexibility to choose the health care plan that best fits their needs. I applaud the Trump Administration for putting “everything on the table if it helps deliver a solution,” to lower health costs, as Health and Human Services Secretary Azar said.

President Obama gave the government more control of the health care system, and services declined while costs skyrocketed. President Trump and I believe the power belongs to the people and you should have as many choices as possible in front of you when you are making health care decisions for you and your family. Americans deserve a health care system that places as little as possible between the doctor and the patient – no gag clauses, bureaucracy, or additional red tape. Government control of the health care system is a disease – and the cure is choice, freedom, and transparency.

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