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Smith, Colleagues Introduce ‘Rural Jobs Act’ to Fight Rural Poverty, Create Jobs

JULY 31ST 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Bipartisan, Bicameral Legislation Would Boost Investment in Rural and Distressed Communities

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Representatives Jason Smith, R-Mo. and Terri Sewell, D-Ala., along with U.S. Senators Roger Wicker, R-Miss., Mark Warner, D-Va., Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., and Ben Cardin, D-Md., today introduced the “Rural Jobs Act” in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. This bipartisan, bicameral legislation would build on the success of the New Market Tax Credit (NMTC) by bringing hundreds of millions of dollars in private investment to some of the poorest rural communities in America.

“The Rural Jobs Act will allow for new economic opportunities in the areas of our country that need it the most,” **Congressman Smith** said. “By building on the success of the New Markets program, the Rural Jobs Act will bring investment to rural communities with persistent poverty and high migration. It is too often that rural communities are overlooked by Washington. This legislation is a targeted approach that will encourage investment in rural America.”

“The Rural Jobs Act would be an important addition to the successful New Market Tax Credit program, which has spurred tens of billions in private investment in many distressed communities across America,” **Senator Wicker** said. “The legislation we have introduced today would help boost these investments in rural areas and ensure that every community is receiving a proportionate share of the benefits of the NMTC.”

“During my time as Governor and in the Senate, I’ve supported initiatives to help create jobs and boost economic opportunity for all Virginians. There’s a lot happening in parts of Southwest and Southside Virginia, but we still have more work to do to ensure that no part of Virginia is left behind. That’s why I’m proud to introduce this legislation to set aside additional tax credits for rural and underserved regions,”

Senator Warner said.

“The New Markets Tax Credits program has played a vital role in helping economically distressed communities in West Virginia attract the private capital needed for economic development investments,” **Senator Capito** said. “The Rural Jobs Act expands upon this already powerful tool by ensuring these investments occur in the communities that need them the most. I’m proud to support this legislation that I know will go a long way in providing the boost these areas of West Virginia need.”

“In Maryland, the New Markets Tax Credit has been deployed throughout our state on a diverse range of infrastructure and community development efforts. I am pleased to support this bipartisan legislation, which will further the reach of the program to low-income rural communities, creating jobs and stimulating our economy across Maryland and across America,” said **Senator Cardin**.

“Alabama’s 7th District knows from experience that the New Market Tax Credit is a proven, cost-effective incentive that spurs investment in areas like Aliceville, where the credit helped transform the Huyck Felt brick plant into a new wood pellet manufacturing facility, creating 275 jobs, and Selma, where the program helped create 55 jobs at a biomass processing facility,” **Rep. Sewell** said. “Too many small towns are struggling to survive, which is why it is critically important that we expand the NMTC to incentivize investment in rural areas and, especially, persistent-poverty rural areas like many of those in the Black Belt to help ensure these communities are not left behind.”

The Rural Jobs Act would expand upon the NMTC program, which provides a modest tax incentive to private investors to invest in low-income communities. NMTC projects have spurred over \$42 billion in private investment and generated over 1 million jobs since 2000. However, less than one in four NMTC jobs have been created in rural communities.

The Rural Jobs Act would help to close the job creation gap by designating \$500 million in NMTC investments for “Rural Job Zones,” which are low-income communities that have a population smaller than 50,000 inhabitants and are not adjacent to an urban area. Under this new definition, Rural Job Zones would be established in 342 out of the 435 congressional districts across the country.

The bill would also require that at least 25 percent of this new investment activity be targeted to persistent poverty counties and high migration counties. There are approximately 400 persistent poverty counties in the United States, 85 percent of which are located in non-metro or rural areas.

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Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - June 21, 2019

JUNE 24TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - June 21, 2019

Congressman Smith Capitol Report - Waste
June 21, 2019

It's been more than two months since the deadline for Congress to pass a budget has passed, and Washington is no closer to slowing its spending. Instead of trying to balance the government's books, the Democrat leadership of the U.S. House of Representatives decided to skip the budget process altogether and go straight to spending, putting the cart before the horse and liberal priorities ahead of common sense. This was on display this week as the House voted on spending packages that have no chance of being signed into law in order to push a radical agenda.

Speaker Pelosi frequently says a budget is a statement of values. By proposing massive spending hikes without a budget, her party is showing they only value spending more of the American people's tax dollars. The spending bills they passed out of the House would bust through current spending caps by more than \$176 billion with no plan at all to pay for the new spending.

Instead of investing in defense or border security, the spending package gives tens of millions more of taxpayer dollars to the United Nations and ends President Trump's

Mexico City Policy, which means the spending package would allow American taxpayer dollars to be spent on abortions overseas. The Trump Administration would be forced to give family planning grants to abortion providers, and many of President Trump's pro-life policies would be reversed.

These radical policies are apparently more pressing to Speaker Pelosi and her caucus than issues taking place on American soil. Just this month I travelled to the southern border and saw the humanitarian and security crisis that is overwhelming our immigration system. It would be bad enough if the spending packages this week passed without addressing the ongoing illegal immigration crisis, but the bills as authored by Democrats would actually make the situation worse. It blocks further construction of a border wall and prohibits government agencies from sharing information with each other about potential illegal immigrants in the country. I authored amendments to get rid of this reckless language and curb illegal immigration, but the Democrat-controlled Rules Committee blocked my amendments from even receiving a vote.

Democrat leaders know that the spending packages passed this week have no chance of being signed into law. The spending bills may not be real, but the consequences for the American people are. They are a complete waste of time, taxpayer dollars, and the opportunity to work together to end the crisis at the border.

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Rep. Smith Hosts Students from SEMO Electric Co-op

JUNE 20TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Rep. Smith Hosts Students from SEMO Electric Co-op

Rep. Smith Hosts Students from SEMO Electric Co-op

U.S. Representative Jason Smith (MO-08) hosted Missouri students participating in the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday.

Twenty-eight students from southern Missouri met Congressman Smith on the U.S. Capitol steps to ask him questions about how their government works and to get to know him as their Representative in Congress. Sponsored by SEMO Electric Co-op were Zack Hueckel from Bell City, Reagan Peters from Burfordville, Clayson Anderson from Bloomfield, Jenna Yates from Bloomfield, Jacob Brown from Oran, and Eva Hester from Bloomfield.

“Just by taking the trip to your nation’s Capital, you’re establishing yourselves as future leaders,” said Congressman Smith. “You’re never too young to make a difference and you wouldn’t believe how effective advocacy from young folks like yourselves is. Making this trip to Washington to see your government firsthand and meeting your representatives will go a long way to making sure your voices are heard.”

The students asked Congressman Smith what his job entails and if he has any favorite duties as a Member of Congress.

“We vote on a lot of things here that won’t affect you for many years to come, but by far my favorite part of the job is being able to give Missouri families immediate help when they’re having difficulty with the federal government,” said Congressman Smith. “Helping seniors deal with a complicated government agency, making sure veterans receive the benefits they earned, and just serving as your customer service representative

in Washington. That’s the best part of this job.”

Congressman Smith hosts NRECA Youth Tour participants from southern Missouri every summer. After meeting with the students, Congressman Smith’s office provided the students a personal tour of the U.S. Capitol.

The NRECA Youth Tour is a national, annual program where students apply and are selected to participate by their local electric cooperative. According to the NRECA, the purpose of the tour is for “students to gain a personal understanding of American history and their role as a citizen by meeting their Representative and Senators.”

More than 1,500 students across the United States take part in the NRECA Youth Tour each year.

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Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - May 31,

Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - May 31, 2019

Congressman Smith Capitol Report
Appreciating our Armed Forces
May 31, 2019

The men and women of the United States military make up the most elite, advanced fighting force the world has ever seen and have never shied away from perilous odds or dangerous conditions. U.S. troops have placed their lives on the line every day to keep our country safe and liberate entire continents from evil. Freedom doesn't come free and those troops, their families, and our country has paid a heavy price.

This week marks the 75th anniversary of Allied Forces storming the beaches of Normandy, France to liberate Western Europe from the Nazi regime. On June 6th, Missouri-native General Omar Bradley commanded hundreds of thousands of American ground forces into one of the largest amphibious invasions in military history, now referred to as D-Day. While the Allied Forces successfully drove the Nazis back and eventually liberated France from Nazi control, the United States would lose close to 2,500 troops in just the first day of the attack on Normandy.

This year Missouri lost one of the last Army Rangers involved in D-Day, who helped take out the artillery that was blasting allied troops. Charles Ryan passed away at the age of 96, living a full life after being wounded in the invasion. He was fortunate to make it out alive; 50 of the 65 men in his unit never saw American soil again.

America lost many heroes on D-Day, but the U.S. also took heavy losses leading up to the invasion 75 years ago. A top-secret training exercise held five weeks prior, called Operation Tiger, ended in disaster when German torpedo boats spotted the massive training exercise. They ambushed the rehearsal, destroying ships and killing more than 749 men. More than 200 men from Missouri died in Operation Tiger, but the painful lessons learned from the rehearsal better prepared the Allied Forces to invade Normandy.

During the month of May, it's tradition to celebrate Military Appreciation Month and show our gratitude to U.S. servicemembers. To kick off the month, I spent some quality time with the five students from southern Missouri who will attend our nation's

prestigious service academies, getting to know them and why they feel a call to serve our country. On Armed Forces Day, which was created by Missouri native President Harry Truman to pay tribute to the men and women of the Armed Forces and the strength of our military, Cape Girardeau was treated to a roaring air show with the Blue Angels, the U.S. Navy's elite fighter squadron, and the U.S. Army Golden Knights Parachute Team.

Of course, not every member of the armed forces is fortunate enough to return to American soil. Last week at the end of Military Appreciation Month, we paused on Memorial Day to remember and honor the brave troops who gave their lives in the line of duty. I attended the grand opening of Missouri's National Veterans Memorial in Perryville, and I spent some time at the full-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial thinking about all of the men and women who have given their lives to protect our country and its values. We owe them a debt we can never repay – so we must pay it forward by honoring their sacrifices and their memories.

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2019 Mid-Session Legislative Update by MO-Senator

Doug Libla

MARCH 22ND 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

2019 Mid-Session Legislative Update by MO-Senator Doug Libla

The First Regular Session of the 100th General Assembly of the State of Missouri began with a call from the governor to prioritize workforce development and infrastructure investment. Over the course of the past 10 weeks, the Missouri Senate has focused on these and many other issues including some that required lengthy debate and deliberation.

The Senate approved four of my legislative proposals. [Senate Bill 21](#) will allow the City of Portageville to propose a 1/4 cent sales tax for the purposes of improving public safety.

[Senate Bill 89](#) will allow the director of revenue to waive the written and skills test for military applicants who have been trained to operate a commercial vehicle while serving our country. This legislation will make it easier for military personnel to obtain a civilian CDL when they leave the military.

[Senate Bill 20](#) extends the DNA Profiling Analysis Fund. Without this extension, it would create a funding shortfall of approximately \$909,579 annually. The DNA Profiling Analysis Fund can only be used by the Highway Patrol crime lab to fulfill the purposes of the DNA profiling system. DNA profiling is a powerful tool used by our law enforcement officers to help solve crimes.

[Senate Bill 90](#) will require all employers with 50 or more workers to report quarterly wage information to the Division of Employment Security in an electronic format. The director will still have the authority, if good cause is shown, to allow paper filing. This will allow the Division of Employment Security to process the information more accurately and in less time.

Senate Bills 21, 89, 20 and 90 have been sent to the Missouri House of Representatives for a committee hearing.

In addition to these legislative proposals, my colleagues and I continue to discuss practical solutions for funding of education across the state. One of the more contentious proposals is [Senate Bill 160](#), a bill that would create the Missouri Empowerment Scholarship Accounts tax credit program. I do not support this proposal because it could cost the state up to \$25 million in General Revenue. In addition, I believe if this legislation were to pass, it would be a detriment to public school resources. As legislators, we have a responsibility to provide the best public education investment possible.

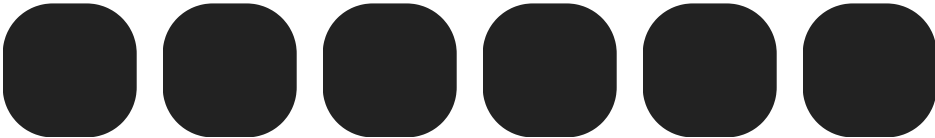
When we return from spring break on March 25, I look forward to the debate on one of my top legislative priorities, [Senate Bill 19](#). This bill eliminates probation or parole for anyone found guilty in the first, second, third or fourth degree of assaulting a law enforcement officer, firefighter or emergency medical provider while performing their official duties. Our emergency responders need to know that members of the Missouri General Assembly have their back. As chairman of the [Senate Transportation and Public Safety Committee](#), I will keep this important issue at the forefront of the Missouri Legislature's agenda during the remaining weeks of session.

Please visit your State Capitol and stop by our office in room 422, or call (573) 751-4843 with any questions, concerns or comments you may have. I am honored to serve the citizens of the 25th Senatorial District.

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