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Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Missouri's Farmers Know Best

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Good afternoon—Congressman Smith was deeply saddened to learn of the tragedy in Branson, Missouri last night and would like to pass along this statement in addition to his Weekly Capitol Report:

“My heart goes out to the families who lost loved ones in the horrible tragedy last night in Branson. I’m thankful for the Missourians who have responded to the emergency by rushing to the scene to prevent greater loss of life and provide support to the survivors. I’m praying for everyone affected by this terrible disaster.” – Congressman Jason Smith (MO-08)

Congressman Smith Capitol Report
Missouri’s Farmers Know Best
July 20, 2018

For Missourians, agriculture is the heart of our communities. The country roads of southeastern and south central Missouri weave together 19,000 farms, home to some of the hardest working people I’ve ever met. This week I’m kicking off a thirty-county swing to hear firsthand from the farmers and ranchers – big and small – who drive Missouri’s economy and feed the world.

The thirty counties I am blessed to represent are rich with every farm imaginable. From the soybean fields in the Bootheel to the cattle pastures in the Ozark Foothills, southern Missouri is one of the most diverse agriculture regions in the country. Our farmers and ranchers raise pigs and cattle and grow corn and cotton. They supply the world with soybeans, timber, rice, wheat, and put milk on the table. Our corner of Missouri is home to sheep and goat fields, trout and catfish farms, honey producers, and wine vineyards. I could go on and on about the variety of farms in our district and the unique challenges they face, but the farmers I talk to have one complaint in common: they are frustrated by people in Washington who think they know better than they do how to manage their farm.

Agriculture is personal to me, as it is to many of the hardworking families in southern Missouri. At Salem High School I was blessed to join FFA, and after studying Agricultural Economics at Mizzou I took out a loan to keep our family farm in the family. As a fourth-generation family farm owner, I know the challenges that are unique to farming and the real harm that misguided Washington bureaucrats cause our farmers and ranchers. The career bureaucrats in Washington don't know what's best for Missouri's farmers and ranchers, the men and women who roll up their sleeves and know the value in a hard day's work on the farm know best.

I'll be driving our country roads all across southern Missouri, bringing local county commissioners, state representatives, farm bureau members, and other agricultural leaders along for the ride. We'll visit a wide variety of farms, listening to family farmers and large operations alike as they open their doors and barns for us and share what makes their farms special. I'm looking forward to driving thousands of miles across our beautiful district and hearing the challenges they face so I can bring their stories and ideas with me to the fight in Washington. I meet regularly with the White House to determine the ways President Trump and I can continue to protect rural America's way of life and I am always encouraged by his sincere interest and concern for Missouri's farmers.

Missouri's farmers feed and clothe the world, and they deserve a level playing field with a government that makes it easier to work their land, not more difficult. As long as I am blessed to represent the hardworking men and women who supply the world with so much, I will do everything I can to keep Washington's hands off of our rural way of life.

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