

Political Blogs



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Senator Doug Libla Statement on Noranda Aluminum

JANUARY 16TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Senator Doug Libla Statement on Noranda Aluminum Press Release

?Statement on Noranda Aluminum Workforce Reduction

Jefferson City, Missouri - It's a sad day in Southeast Missouri with the recent announcement by Noranda Aluminum in New Madrid that two of their three potlines have gone offline due to a catastrophic loss of electrical supply. Therefore, in the upcoming weeks Noranda announced reduction of employees at the New Madrid Smelter to adjust for operating only a single potline instead of three. This is a tragedy for all of the workers and their families who depend on Noranda and their good paying jobs. The local communities and subsidiary companies that supply Noranda will also be affected.

Manufacturing companies across the United States have been struggling due to burdensome regulations and unfair trade laws passed by the federal government. The reluctance of USA custom agents and other government officials to enforce our country's trade laws has resulted in foreign countries like China to continue dumping cheap, inferior products, and manipulating currency exchange rates.

Coal-fired power plants over the past several years have also come under attack by the federal government, making it harder for families and businesses to pay their electric bills, especially in the Midwest. Affordable and reliable electric rates are vital to businesses remaining open and providing jobs

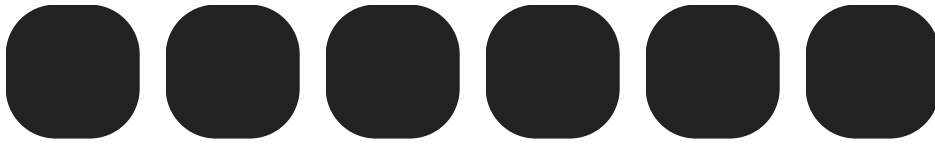
We need Washington D.C. to quit passing burdensome regulations and defend our homegrown manufacturers from unfair government subsidized trade practices by foreign competitors. The combination of rising electrical costs, lack of enforcement of our trade laws, and job killing regulations is destroying manufacturing and businesses across our country. Many of Noranda's domestic competitors have been going out of business in recent years because of these very same issues. It is very difficult to remain in business without affordable electrical rates. USA manufacturers cannot afford to continue producing products and selling below manufacturing cost.

Until our federal and state governments change their ways, we will continue to see more American companies struggle or close. I will continue to do everything I can in Jefferson City to assist Noranda and its employees through this stormy period. My prayers and sympathy goes out to the workers and families of Noranda already affected by the layoffs, and those who may be in the future.

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2016 Legislative Session Begins with Call to Action

JANUARY 11TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

2016 Legislative Session Begins with Call to Action

2016 Legislative Session Begins with Call to Action from House Speaker Richardson

The opening day of the 2016 legislative session was marked by a speech from House Speaker Todd Richardson in which he called upon members to work together to, “find answers to the seminal challenges of our time and make tough decisions.” Richardson reminded members that the Missouri House of Representatives, “cannot be a place where inaction, infighting and indifference define us. This must be a place where we tackle and solve real problems.”

In his speech, Richardson highlighted many of the recent accomplishments of the legislature. He emphasized the General Assembly’s work to end the practice of taxation by citation in the municipal court system; passage of the first income tax cut in a century; reforms to the state’s welfare system to help get people out of poverty rather than trap them in it; and efforts to reduce the numbers of abortions in the state by 30 percent over the last 10 years.

Richardson also cited several accomplishments that have not received as much attention including efforts to make oral chemotherapy medications more affordable for Missourians battling cancer; work to ensure Missourians with eating disorders have access to the help and care they need; and proactive steps taken by the legislature to protect children from the ever-growing dangers of human trafficking. As Richardson said in his speech, “By doing so, we’ve made our state

a better, more compassionate place.”

In setting the tone for the upcoming session, Richardson reminded his colleagues that while much had been accomplished, the legislature still has much to do. Richardson noted that, “We live in a state where wages are stagnant. Consider this; the spending power of a Missouri family is \$5000 – less than it was at the start of this century. We live in a state where a devastating cycle of dependency traps too many of our fellow Missourians in poverty. More people are on government assistance than ever before. Spending on welfare and entitlement programs is growing at a rate faster than our economy.”

Richardson called on his colleagues to work together to help find solutions to the problems facing Missouri families, and to develop ideas that will allow Missourians to pursue the American Dream rather than be trapped in poverty. Richardson ended his speech by asking members if they will use their, “time and the unique power we all hold to make this state a better place and to be an advocate for those who sent us here? The answer to that question is the one that will define us.”

Opening Day of Session Highlighted by Emphasis on Ethics Reform

During his Opening Day Address, House Speaker Richardson also made it clear that the top legislative priority for the House in the first days of session will be substantive ethics reform. Richardson said he plans to immediately assign every ethics bill filed in the House to committee so that members can begin a thorough discussion on the proposals designed to improve the culture at the Missouri State Capitol.

Richardson said he is asking the committee to, “act with haste to send us a set of substantive, meaningful, single subject ethics bills so that they may be the very first matter that this General Assembly tackles. In doing so we will improve the environment in Jefferson City, and begin the process of restoring the public’s confidence in this institution. There is no rule or law that can make our imperfect process perfect, but we can, and we must, work to improve the culture here in the people’s Capitol.”

Richardson has already stated he supports implementing a ban on all gifts from lobbyists to legislators and an end to the revolving door that allows elected officials to immediately become lobbyists after leaving office. Legislators also will discuss improvements to the personal financial disclosure requirements, and prohibiting members from also serving as paid political consultants. Richardson said he expects several bills to make it to the floor next week and for the House to approve and send the bills on to the Senate.

Lawmakers to Consider Transportation Funding Issue

Another pressing issue lawmakers will try to tackle in 2016 deals with the finding a much-needed funding solution for Missouri’s transportation system. While increasing revenues have made the situation less dire than it was a year ago, the state’s transportation department still needs an additional \$160 million in new revenues to adequately maintain and improve the existing highway system. During the opening day of the legislative session, lawmakers had differing views

on how to address the funding shortfall.

Some lawmakers support a small fuel tax increase – 1.5 cents for gasoline and 3.5 cents for diesel fuel – to generate additional dollars for the state’s roads. They noted that at with the current low gas prices, a minimal fuel tax increase would have minimal impact on the pocket books of Missourians. The Senate gave first-round approval to legislation to raise the tax last year, but the bill never made it to the other side of the building. This year, versions of the bill have been filed in both the House and Senate.

However, many in the legislature are opposed to any sort of tax increase. They note that voters rejected a proposed increase in 2014 that would have increased the state sales tax by ¾ cent to raise an additional \$540 million. House Speaker Todd Richardson pointed out that the proposed small fuel tax increase would generate only a portion of the new funding needed by the transportation department. The proposed increase would generate only \$56 million of the \$160 million needed for Missouri’s roads. Richardson also said, “We’re going to be focused in the House on finding some ways to improve the transportation system and the amount of money we’re spending on transportation through the budget – and trying to find some ways that we can prioritize that spending as we have revenue growth.”

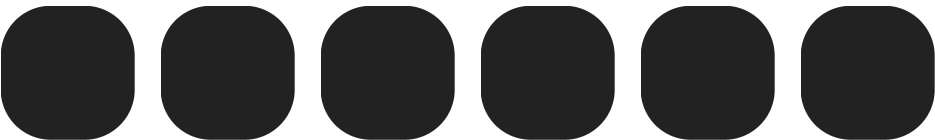
In the coming weeks, lawmakers will spend time discussing the possible solutions for Missouri’s road funding crisis.

Tila Hubrecht
151st State Representative

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Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - January 8, 2016

JANUARY 11TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - January 8, 2016

Session is in!

Session officially started this week. The opening day of session was more ceremonial than anything but it was a very nice session. The week did go quickly and was very full with meetings finishing some last minute preparations on bills as well as beginning discussion on new items that need to be addressed.

This session will be very busy not only with legislation I am sponsoring and other legislation I am supporting but also very busy making sure some legislation never makes it out of the House. One example of this is a bill filed that will require a firearm purchaser to undergo a background check, sign consent forms, receive parental consent, and be provided with specified information mandated by the state including physician information on the risk of firearm misuse and videos and pictures depicting firearm injuries and victims prior to the purchase. After a firearm purchase he or she must meet with specified individuals who have been a victim or associated with a victim of violence. The firearm dealer shall also be required to provide the purchaser with specified information including alternatives to purchasing a firearm which includes materials regarding peaceful and nonviolent conflict resolution. This type of legislation is just one example of many bills that I will work to ensure never reaches the Governor's desk. I am not sure but I am going to assume the sponsor of this bill doesn't understand most people who own firearms due so to hunt or shoot in competitions, most people do not purchase a firearm with the specific intention of killing another human being.

I am looking forward to working hard to see common sense ideas that will be positive for Missouri and Missourians succeed. I am also working to set up a Town Hall meeting to give you an opportunity to talk with me about ways I can better serve you, the first Town Hall meeting will be announced within the next two weeks. I am working to finalize a couple of details and will get this completed

as quickly as possible. Another new event I am working to arrange is having one lunch time each week that I can have set aside for constituents from our district to come to Jefferson City to meet with myself and other legislators if needed to discuss issues impacting you. I am waiting to receive our committee meeting schedule before I begin scheduling these lunch meetings, as soon as I receive the official committee schedule, I will begin these lunch meetings. If you would like to be included in one of these, please call my office and ask Debby to write your name on the "Lunch List". I will need your contact information to schedule a time when you are available to come to Jefferson City.

If you have an issue, please feel free to contact my office, Debby schedules all my appointments and will be happy to arrange a time for us to meet in person if possible or at the very least for us to talk over the phone. My office number is (573) 751-1494. Next week I will be attempting to do my first video report, we will post this on Facebook and other social media sites as I learn how to add these sites

I am very humbled to serve you in Jefferson City and I want you all to know I very much appreciate this opportunity to work for you. Thank you and I will continue to work for a return of common sense to government.

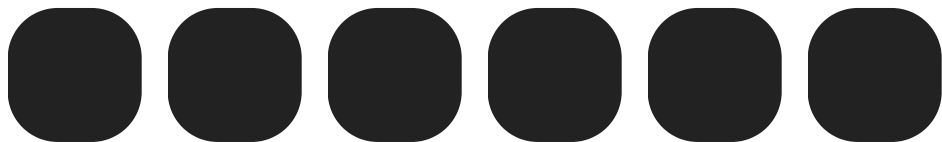
Until next week!!

Tila

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Jason Smith's Capitol Report - January 8, 2016

JANUARY 11TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report - January 8, 2016

SCRUBing Away the D.C. Regulatory Machine

Dear Friend,

175,268. That is the number of pages in the Code of Federal Regulations. Across south central and southeast Missouri that number weighs heavy on the backs of small businesses, farmers and families. It also represents a serious problem in Washington: a president circumventing Congress to try and force his rejected policy ideas on the American people.

In 2009, the president failed to get his signature "Cap & Trade" legislation through a Democrat controlled Congress - a policy which would increase the cost of heating homes across the nation. Faced with that failure, the president and the EPA rolled out "Clean Power Plan" regulations in August aimed at bypassing the rejection of Congress to implement Cap & Trade through Executive order. Folks across the 8th Congressional District have told me this regulation alone would make their utility bills triple in cost.

Just this week we saw once again a president intent on going around Congress and against the will of American's people by pushing forward new 'Executive Actions' to try and further restrict 2nd amendment rights.

Outdated and often times conflicting federal regulations, never approved by Congress, are now estimated to impose a nearly \$1.86 trillion burden annually on Americans. That's a cost of roughly \$15,000 for every household - higher than the

weight of all individual income taxes paid each year to the government. Under the Obama Administration over 24,000 new Federal Rules & Regulations have been finalized, unfortunately the president is now threatening to aggressively grow that list during his final year in office.

This system of burdensome regulations needs to stop. Whether it is in my own business, the state capitol or the halls of Washington, DC, I have been fighting the regulatory machine. This week the House of Representatives took a serious step in regulation reform by passing a bill I authored known as the SCRUB Act - legislation aimed at 'scrubbing' the maze of federal regulations of outdated, unnecessary, costly and duplicative rules which conflict with those at the State or Local level, returning power back to the states.

For example Department of Labor should not be telling FFA students in Missouri they can't do work on the family farm. The National Park Service should not be introducing new regulations restricting the decades old practice of river baptisms on the Current River. The EPA doesn't need to regulate every drainage ditch, farm, wood stove or even the beautiful clean air of the Mark Twain National Forest. Manufacturers in our district shouldn't have to close, shed 500 jobs, and move south of the border to Mexico because the cost of complying with over-regulation just becomes too high here in America.

The insanity of the Washington Regulatory Machine needs to stop. This is why my SCRUB Act is so important. It will give the American people the tools to get Washington bureaucrats who have never owned a business or been on a farm off their backs. America's future with SCRUB in place is one where the regulators have to answer to you, where we finally clean out the cluttered garage of federal red tape and let job creators and producers return focus back to what they know best - growing our economy.

Sincerely,

Jason Smith

8th Congressional District - Missouri

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Smith's Bill Passes to Reduce Federal Regulatory Burdens

JANUARY 07TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Bill Passes to Reduce Federal Regulatory Burdens

Jan 7, 2016 Press Release

On bipartisan vote Smith bill passes to reduce federal regulatory burdens

Washington, DC – Today, [legislation authored by Congressman Jason Smith](#) (MO-08) passed the U.S. House on a bipartisan vote of 245-174. The Smith bill, known as H.R. 1155, the Searching for and Cutting Regulations that are Unnecessarily Burdensome (SCRUB) Act would eliminate and remove outdated federal regulations now estimated to impose nearly a \$1.86 trillion burden on Americans.

Upon passage, **U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan commented**, “A thorough review of federal regulations holding back opportunity in this country is long overdue. I congratulate Representative Smith on passage of this bill and for serving as a leader on regulatory reform. His work to bring greater accountability to government is of great service to the business owners, farmers and families who are facing a maze of costly and complex Washington regulations. This legislation provides an important check on a lame duck White House intent on pushing through more rules, regulations and executive orders inconsistent with the will of the American people.”

After the vote, **Representative Smith said the following**, “175,268 pages of federal regulations are stifling economic growth and opportunity in this country. The SCRUB Act sets up a process to finally review and get off

the books and out of the way many of these outdated, burdensome, duplicative and unnecessary regulations.” **Smith continued**, “The American people have had enough of this White House circumventing Congress to try to push through its failed policy attempts with new regulatory and rule making. A bureaucrat in Washington should not be telling a farmer in the bootheel of Missouri or a small business owner in Poplar Bluff how to run their operation. With the SCRUB Act we place that power back into the hands of the people who are actually affected on a daily basis by the regulations coming out of Washington.”

Committee on Oversight & Government Reform Chairman Jason Chaffetz said, “Today’s House passage of the SCRUB Act is an important step toward reducing unnecessary regulation. Regulations can be necessary to ensure health and safety. But excessive and outdated regulations only serve to divert limited resources to efforts that waste time and money. This bill provides the opportunity for tremendous savings for government agencies and the public at large. I applaud the good work of Congressman Smith in drafting this legislation.”

H.R. 1155, the SCRUB Act establishes a commission set by the President, U.S. Senate & U.S. House Leaders to review, remove and eliminate regulations that are unnecessary, outdated or conflict with state or local regulations. According to a recent estimate, the federal regulatory burden adds up to a cost of approximately \$15,000 annually per U.S. household. Specifically, the legislation ensures a system of checks and balances in the review process and prioritizes review of regulations that are major rules, are more than 15 years old, impose paperwork burdens that can be reduced substantially without significantly diminishing effectiveness, or impose disproportionately high costs on small businesses. Additionally, the Commission will prioritize removing federal regulations that are either duplicative or conflict with State regulations or can be strengthened while reducing costs.

Key Federal Regulatory Highlights:

- Federal regulations now impose an estimated burden of \$1.86 trillion. That is roughly \$15,000 per U.S. household and higher than combined individual and corporate federal income taxes.
- The Code of Federal Regulations now contains 175,268 pages of regulations in 235 volumes.
- Under the Obama Administration over 24,000 Federal Rules & Regulations have been finalized.
- In 2009, H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy & Security Act, better known as ‘Cap & Trade’ failed to advance on the Senate Floor under the leadership of then Leader Harry Reid & Speaker Nancy Pelosi. On August 3, 2015 the President & EPA announced new regulations known as the “Clean Power Plan” aimed at circumventing Congress to achieve the goals of Cap & Trade.
- On January 5, 2016 the President announced new Executive Actions on guns to achieve new policy measures without Congressional approval.

Congressman Smith has been leading the charge to keep expensive and unnecessary rules from bankrupting families, farms, and businesses since he was in the Missouri State House.

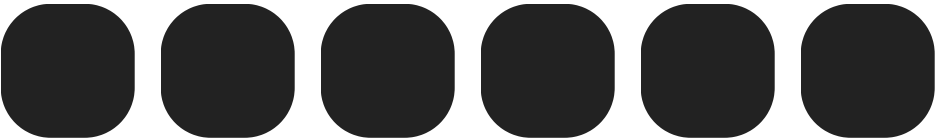
"In the time I have known Jason as a public servant he has always demanded more accountability and transparency from government, he did it in Jefferson City and I am not surprised to see him leading the same type of effort now in Washington, DC," **said Missouri Speaker of the House Todd Richardson**. Adding, "I am proud of the work Congressman Smith has taken up and his leadership on the SCRUB Act to curtail the overbearing reach that so many small business owners, farmers, families, and taxpayers are feeling here in Southeast Missouri and the rest of our state."

H.R. 1155 was supported by the National Association of Manufacturers, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council, National Taxpayers Unions, Americans for Tax Reform and others.

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