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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

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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.

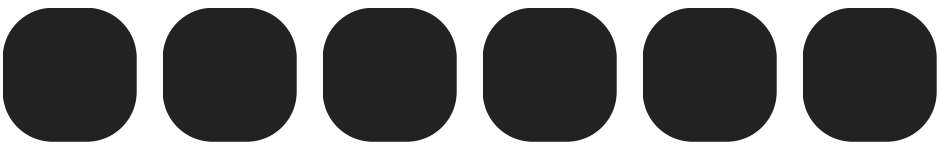
The NRECA Youth Tour is a national, annual program where students apply and are selected to participate by their local electric cooperative. According to the NRECA, the purpose of the tour is for “students to gain a personal understanding of American history and their role as a citizen by meeting their 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, 2019

JUNE 04TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

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.

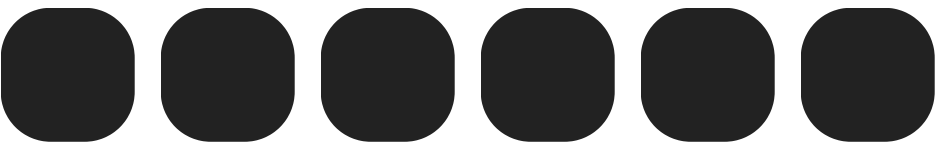
During the month of May, it's tradition to celebrate Military Appreciation Month and show our gratitude to U.S. servicemembers. To kick off the month, I spent some quality time with the five students from southern Missouri who will attend our nation's prestigious service academies, getting to know them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

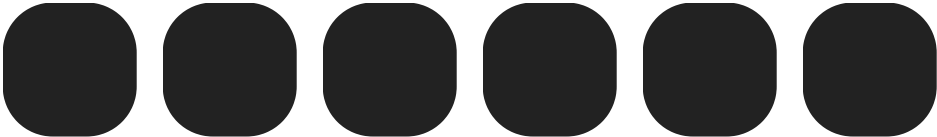
second, third or fourth degree of assaulting a law enforcement officer, firefighter or emergency medical provider while performing their official duties. Our emergency responders need to know that members of the Missouri General Assembly have their back. As chairman of the [Senate Transportation and 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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U.S. Senator Blunt Tours Missouri's National Veterans Memorial

MARCH 11TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

U.S. Senator Blunt Tours Missouri's National Veterans Memorial

U.S Senator Roy Blunt (Mo.) toured Missouri’s National Veterans Memorial in Perryville.

“We owe a debt of gratitude to those who made the ultimate sacrifice serving our nation in the Vietnam War,” said Blunt. “This memorial is a powerful tribute to the more than 1,400 Missourians and thousands of Americans whose memories are forever etched in our nation’s history. I’m grateful for Jim Eddleman’s service to our nation and his tireless efforts to build this memorial so families, friends, and veterans have a place close to home to honor their loved ones.”

Prior to touring the memorial, Blunt discussed his efforts in Congress to honor veterans in Missouri and across the nation. Blunt mentioned his **Veteran PEER Act**, bipartisan legislation that expanded veterans’ access to peer counseling specialists to better combat the risks of suicide and treat associated mental health conditions. Blunt also discussed a recent **letter** that he and the entire Missouri Congressional delegation sent to President Trump urging the administration to designate a state funeral for the last Medal of Honor recipient from World War II.

Blunt continued, “While we can never fully repay our veterans for their sacrifices, we must do our part to ensure they have the benefits they have earned and deserve. From improving and expanding access to quality mental and physical health treatment to supporting our heroes in every step of their career, I’ll continue advocating for policies that help us fulfill our obligations to those who served.”

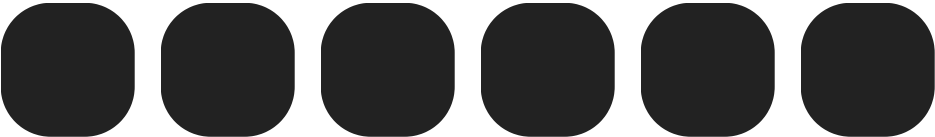
In September 2017, Blunt participated in a **ceremony** at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. that marked the start of a cross-country trip where an American flag and POW/MIA flag, each of which was flown over the memorial, made their way to the site of the Missouri’s National Veterans Memorial Park.

Missouri is also home to the nation’s first Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which was dedicated on Dec. 2, 1967 in Wentzville.

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Congressman Smith - Capitol Report Growing Leaders February 22, 2019

FEBRUARY 23RD 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Congressman Smith - Capitol Report Growing Leaders February 22, 2019

Congressman Smith Capitol Report
Growing Leaders
February 22, 2019

This week FFA students and chapters around the country participated in National FFA week and celebrated FFA's impact in our schools, communities, and our farms. FFA is one of the largest youth organizations in the United States and it's about much more than growing crops and raising animals; it's about growing leaders.

More than 25,000 young Missourians wear the FFA's famous National Blue corduroy jacket with Corn Gold lettering. It's a tradition that dates back to the 1933 FFA Convention in Kansas City, but the values and traditions FFA teaches young people today date back much further and have been held closely by Americans for hundreds of years. Agriculture is deeply rooted in America's history, as are the values of responsibility, accountability, hard work, and building up the community around you. FFA teaches students an appreciation for both the joys and discomforts of agriculture, a belief in their own abilities, and an aspiration to live an honest life.

Like many other alumni, I know my life wouldn't be the same had I never joined FFA. Twenty years ago this year I earned the American FFA degree, an achievement I'm still proud of today. Finding an organization I could be passionate about broke me out of my shell and gave me the confidence to try new things outside of my comfort zone. In fact, the first time I ever visited our nation's capital was through an FFA leadership program.

FFA has a wide range of activities that allow students to discover their passion in life and explore their unique talents. Students can exhibit or judge livestock, learn to manage soil and grasslands, and participate in one of the many contest teams. There's an activity for everyone in FFA, from agriculture sales to debating parliamentary procedure, practicing public speaking, and even joining the FFA choir. While they're pursuing their individual interests, students learn teamwork, communication skills, and become more developed leaders.

During my farm tour last year, I was blessed to meet a lot of FFA members from southern Missouri. At Valley R-VI School District in Caledonia, school officials partnered with the local agricultural community to create an FFA farm next to the school, giving students the incredible opportunity to learn the best agricultural practices firsthand. And when I held a Farmhall in Oran, I was impressed by the number of young farmers in attendance, many of whom started out in agriculture with FFA. They showed me the latest drones and technology that are becoming more common on farms today. I was reminded of the FFA creed, which states, "I believe in the future of agriculture... in the promise of better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us from the struggles of former years."

When I met with Fredericktown R-I FFA students this week, I told the students that while FFA instills a deep appreciation for agriculture and prepares them for agricultural careers, their futures are hardly limited to a life on the farm. FFA members are future biologists, chemists, veterinarians, engineers, and entrepreneurs. FFA alumni include Members of Congress, athletes, famous actors, CEOs of major companies, and even former President of the United States Jimmy Carter.

The life skills, work ethic, and values FFA members learn will serve them well their whole life, regardless of the career path they choose. As we celebrate FFA week this week, we should celebrate all that FFA does to prepare students for their futures. FFA does more than just grow crops and animals – it strengthens agriculture, builds communities, and grows leaders.

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