



CONGRESSMAN

John J. Duncan, Jr.

Washington Report



Second District—Tennessee

December 2017

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

✓ **Tax Cut**

Republicans in Congress have passed a tax cut which will total \$1.437 trillion over the next 10 years. This is the official estimate, although at best this is just an educated guess. The smartest economists in the world cannot say with absolute certainty where the economy will be in the next two or three years, much less 10 years from now. The tax cuts could be more, or they could be less, and only if they stay in effect. It is surprising that so many people talk about making some tax cuts permanent. Actually, the next Congress, or one years from now, could change or do away with any or every cut in this latest tax bill. This tax bill has gotten some very false or at least very unfair, distorted publicity because a few very wealthy people and some big corporations will get some of the cuts. However, since our combined federal, state, and local corporate taxes are among the highest in the world, we had to reduce the corporate rate unless we want to continue seeing companies move to other countries. And since about 45% now pay no federal income taxes, there could be no significant cut without some going to upper income people. But the bulk of the individual (non-corporate) income tax cut in this bill will go to middle income citizens. Thomas Schatz, President of the Citizens Against Government Waste, said: "This taxpayer-first bill will lower tax rates on American families; simplifies the tax code; and makes American companies more competitive globally."

✓ **The Goal**

The main goal of this latest tax bill is to get more money into the private

sector. The most wasteful, least economical, least efficient way to spend money is to turn it over to the federal government. If this was not true, countries like Cuba, North Korea, and the former Soviet Union would have been heavens on earth. Socialism, even if disguised as liberalism or progressivism, simply does not work. Venezuela, with its great oil reserves, was potentially one of the wealthiest countries in the world. After about 15 years of socialist leadership, several million ended up begging for food or eating out of garbage cans, and newborn babies were dying for lack of proper medicine. Government is wasteful because most of the incentives or pressures to hold down costs and operate efficiently are removed. There is waste in the private sector, but a business that continually wastes money will soon go out of business. Leaving more money in private hands will do more to create jobs and hold down prices, and the ones who benefit the most will be lower income and working people. Wealthy elitists come out best under big government, and this can be seen most clearly by the fact that six of the wealthiest counties in the U.S. are suburban to Washington, D.C.

✓ **Billionaires**

No member of Congress is attempting to help any billionaires or even multi-millionaires by voting for the tax-cut bill. The 35% corporate tax rate, added to various state and local taxes, gives us one of the highest corporate rates among developed nations. This tax rate, added to lower wages in most other countries and very strict U.S. environmental regulations, has caused many thousands of businesses to leave. According to an article in Newsweek on Nov. 29,

"most Americans will see a significant tax cut under the proposed plans from Republican lawmakers, including virtually all lower and middle-income workers and a majority of upper-income earners." This is primarily because of the doubling of the standard deduction to \$24,000 for a couple, a lowering of the rates, and a big increase in the child tax credit.

✓ **Economic Growth**

Hugh Hewitt, a nationally-syndicated radio host and Washington Post columnist, said recently he would hate to see how far the stock market would drop if we did not pass the tax cut. In my opinion, the growth averaging 2% a year during the previous administration, years in which our national debt and federal regulations exploded, was too slow. The President of the Gallup Organization said in a well-publicized speech that we started closing 70,000 businesses a year more than were opened, something that had not happened since the Great Depression. Under our new President, emphasizing deregulation and the market expecting a tax cut, growth has been above 3% for three straight quarters, the stock market has reached record highs, and consumer confidence is the highest in 17 years. But a recent paper co-authored by Lawrence Summers, President Obama's Secretary of the Treasury, shows that we need to continue following pro-business, pro-growth policies. His report said since our recession in 2008-9, "the recovery has been so much slower this time around that it won't be long until our total growth since the start of the crisis will be worse than it was at this point of the Great Depression. In other words,

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the economy has grown less in the 2010s than it did in the 1930s." Mr. Summers also wrote a column in the Dec. 11 Washington Post in which he said the stock market is in a "sugar high." Another recession is almost inevitable, and the only way to delay it or hold it off is to have lower taxes and fewer regulations and make it easier and less expensive to open new businesses.

✓ **Stadium Subsidies**

One provision in the House-passed tax legislation was elimination of tax-free bonds to finance sports stadiums. Most professional sports teams are owned now by billionaires or at least very wealthy multimillionaires. They have been able to blackmail cities into building Taj Mahal-type stadiums by threatening to move the teams. This has led some cities to tear down stadiums that were very good and relatively young to build super luxury palace-type stadiums for very wealthy owners. It is not fair to make lower and middle income taxpayers, many of whom do not even come to the games, to finance new stadiums for very wealthy owners and players. Unfortunately, the elimination of these tax-free bonds was not included in the Senate's tax legislation; thus, it will not be included in the final overall package.

✓ **Sports Salaries**

When I was a boy, I was a big sports fan and sold programs, popcorn, and cokes at UT football and basketball games and Knoxville hockey games and was a batboy for the Smokies. But these sports salaries are simply out of whack. I am pleased that the tax bill included the highest rate—37%—for those making over \$1 million a year. I am a UT graduate, and my offices have helped many students, professors, and even sports teams in many ways over the years. I have nothing personally against any coach and hope the new UT coach does well. But I am disgusted by these buyouts. We just finished paying one former coach \$100,000 a month, not to coach, and now we'll be paying over \$8 million to the latest ex-coach. The University of Tennessee and all other public colleges and universi-

ties are financed in very large part by federally-subsidized student loans and much other federal and state tax money. I understand the football program pays for itself and several other sports. This buyout money should be used to help lower tuition, and Congress and the state legislature should stop giving so much taxpayer money to any university that is paying millions to people to not coach.

✓ **Nuclear Agreement**

Gen. Joseph Dunford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee recently that Iran is complying with the landmark nuclear deal and the agreement has achieved its goal of curbing Tehran's programs. Two cyber security CEOs were quoted in a Capitol Hill newspaper as saying there would be a tremendous backlash by Iranian hackers against the U.S. if we pull out of the deal now. Stuart McClure said, "I personally think they'll double down their efforts...and we'll probably see a lot more sophisticated attacks." And Ben Read said, "They're plenty good enough to cause a lot of difficulty." We have become far too dependent on and controlled by our technology, and hackers always find a way to break into the newest, most sophisticated systems there are. Also, I just do not believe we should pull out of this agreement when almost everyone who has looked at this in detail says Iran is doing what it is supposed to be doing.

✓ **Voting Machines**

One leading national magazine had an article Dec. 11 entitled "Insecure Ballots," pointing out that "voting rolls are bloated with deceased voters, duplicate registrations, and people who moved away long ago without notifying the election office." One of my committees a few days earlier had held a hearing entitled "Cybersecurity of Voting Machines." In my last newsletter I said that in my opinion cybersecurity is a multibillion dollar hoax, because hackers always devise ways to break in. This past July, at the annual DEFCON hacker conference, they set up a Voting Machine Hacking Village to show the vulnerability of U.S. election machinery. The final report said, "by the end of the con-

ference, every piece of equipment in the Voting Village was effectively breached in some manner. Participants with little prior knowledge and only limited tools and resources were quite capable of undermining the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of these systems..." We should try to emulate the Canadian system. I read several years ago that Canada has much smaller precincts, averaging roughly 500 voters, and uses only the very old fashioned and thus much less expensive paper ballots in their province (equivalent to our states) and federal (or national) elections. Their elections are much more secure than ours where we have been seduced into buying the latest technology which can all be easily hacked.

✓ **Student Loans**

I have spoken many times over the years and written numerous articles about how harmful the federal student loan program has become for so many students and families all across the Nation. I have sent suggestions to the Education Committee on things Congress could do to help lower the cost of college. The December/January issue of the Reader's Digest has a lengthy article entitled "The Student Debt Racket," reporting that 44 million Americans now have student loan debts with more than one-fourth behind in their payments. Now, the total debt is almost \$1.5 trillion and heading up. In one recent year, the government garnished the benefits of 155,000 citizens. Jessie Suren of Hershey, Pennsylvania, got her degree, could not find fulltime employment, and now works two part-time jobs to try to pay some of her \$90,000 debt. She said: "My loans are a black cloud hanging over me. I'm a student-debt slave." This program has led to big increases in the pay of many college administrators and tenured professors and has made some owners of student loan companies wealthy, but we should not be encouraging young people to take on such huge loans before their careers are even started. We should set very low limits on the amount any undergraduate can borrow. But the university/college lobby is one of the strongest in this Country, and they probably could

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successfully oppose such a limit at this point.

✓ **Bad Charities**

We have sent so many millions of good jobs to other countries over the last 50 years or so that under-employment continues to be a serious problem. Many thousands who formerly would have gotten white collar jobs in business have now founded many thousands of charities, museums, and non-profits of all types. Some are good, but many are being used mainly to give high incomes to their executives. Three veterans' charities have been exposed for spending millions on misleading solicitations, fundraising, and even vacations at five star resorts. The Humane Society, according to a column in the Washington Times, puts more into its pension plan than it gives to pet shelters and gave only one percent to local humane societies. Congress needs to crack down on bad charities, and I am working on a bill to at least give the public more information on them. People would be far better off to send their money somewhere other than charities that spend most of their money on tear jerker advertising and instead contribute to local churches, charities, and colleges that they can visit or personally see are doing good work.

✓ **Dangerous City**

As of Dec. 4, 629 people had been murdered this year in Chicago, and 3,357 had been wounded. As of the same date, 14 Americans had been killed and 100 wounded in Afghanistan and 18 killed and 32 wounded in Iraq. Over 10,000 cases came through my Court during the 7½ years I was a Judge. I tried 78 jury trials during my first year, and many in other years, but jury trials have almost become a thing of the past. Almost all plead guilty and apply for probation, and I would receive lengthy reports on their life histories. Over 90% of the defendants in felony cases in my Court were raised in father-absent households. I know that many outstanding people have come from single parent homes. But I also have read that around 85% of all children in

many of our biggest cities are being born out of wedlock. Congress needs to support programs that educate young men about how harmful it is to father children they do not intend to raise and programs that encourage more men to teach in elementary schools and expand church and civic programs that give young boys good male role models.

✓ **Small Problems**

Big Government is really good at only one thing: turning very small problems into very big ones. In the mid-90's, the doctor who delivered me came to a reception and brought my records. He said his fee was \$60 back then for nine months of care and the delivery if they could afford it. It shocks students at UT when I tell them tuition was \$90 a quarter my first year – \$270 for the academic year. It was \$405 my senior year. But in the mid-60s, the federal govern-

ment began getting into medical care and pushing the student loan program. It seems that liberals find a very small problem for very few people, and their solution is always to let the government "help." Then it turns into a huge problem for everyone, because costs just explode on anything the federal government subsidizes. There was a day when medical care was cheap and affordable for almost everyone and when almost no one had to borrow money to go to college. Now many millions are in debt thanks to "help" from the government.

✓ **Popular Place**

The Knoxville area has been one of the most popular places to move to in this country for at least 40 or 45 years. My guess is that it is now getting close to half of the roughly 775,000 in the Second District who have moved from someplace else.

✓ **Saudi Blockade**

I was very pleased that President Trump on Dec. 6th called on the government of Saudi Arabia to end its very cruel, inhumane blockade of humanitarian aid for Yemen. I spoke on the floor of the House about this on Nov. 8. My speech is printed below.

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN YEMEN

November 8, 2017

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, there is a heartbreaking photo in today's Washington Post showing two small boys, toddler-size, in a hospital in Yemen being treated for cholera. The story says the International Red Cross is now being prohibited by the Government of Saudi Arabia from shipping chlorine tablets into Yemen to treat this disease that has now affected more than 900,000 people there.

This is a humanitarian crisis of the first magnitude and it should not be tolerated. Many people are dying. Most of the victims of this disease are women, children, and senior citizens.

In yesterday's American Conservative magazine, Daniel Larison wrote: "The Saudi-led blockade of Yemen has been starving the population of essential goods for years, but the complete shutdown of all ports threatens to cause massive loss of life if it not reversed immediately."

The head of the U.N. World Force Program is warning that hundreds of thousands of children in Yemen will be "on the brink of starvation if the Saudi-led coalition's blockade of air, sea, and land access lasts for even 2 weeks."

David Beasley, of the U.N., told the Associated Press, if access remains shut down, "I can't imagine this will not be one of the most devastating humanitarian catastrophes we have seen in decades."

Mr. Speaker, Saudi Arabia is supposed to be an ally of ours. Those of us in Congress should demand, urge, or at least plead with officials in Saudi Arabia to end this very cruel, inhumane blockade, and allow the Red Cross to get crucial food, medicine, and other supplies in to these people before many more die needlessly.

Unfortunately, while the blockage was eased a little, a U.N. official said on Dec. 12 there still was a danger of famine for 8,000,000 people if the Saudis did not fully lift it.

The following column was published on several national websites and was presented on the floor of the House on December 6. I had the privilege of serving in the Army many years ago, and I am very proud of my military service. I believe that national defense is the most important and most legitimate function of the federal government. But I also believe that with our debt and deficit problems, we need to cut spending in every area if we are going to give our children and grandchildren the kind of future that we want them to have.



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE *115th* CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

House of Representatives

Several times over my 29 years in Congress I have wondered whether there are any fiscal conservatives at the Pentagon.

It seems that the Defense Department is just like every other gigantic bureaucracy. When it comes to money, the refrain is always “more, more, more.” On November 14, the House passed what one Capitol Hill paper described as a “\$700 billion compromise defense bill.” It was \$80 billion over the budget caps and many billions more than even President Trump had requested.

I opposed almost all the major initiatives of the Obama administration. But it was false to say that the Defense Department was “depleted” or “eviscerated” during those years, or that now we must “rebuild the military.”

In fact, public relations experts in future years should conduct studies about how the Defense Department has been able to convince the public it has been cut when it is getting more money than ever.

Defense Department appropriations have more than doubled since 2000. In addition, the Department has gotten extra billions in several supplemental or emergency appropriation bills.

The military construction bill is a separate bill that has added another \$109.5 billion over the last 10 years. It would be hard to find any U.S. military base any place in the world that has not had several new buildings constructed over the last few years.

In fiscal year 2016, we spent over \$177 billion on new equipment, guns, tanks, etc. We have spent similar amounts for many years. Most of this equipment does not wear out or have to be replaced after just one year.

It is ironic that the only President in the last 60 or 70 years who has tried to rein in defense spending is the only President in that period who spent most of his career in the military.

In Evan Thomas’ book, [Ike’s Bluff](#), when told by his top staffer that he could not reduce defense spending, President Eisenhower said if he gave another star to every general who cut his budget, there would be “such a rush to cut costs you’ll have to get out of the way.”

The book also quotes Eisenhower as saying “Heaven help us if we ever have a President who doesn’t know as much about the military as I do.”

Therein lies an explanation for a big part of what has caused much excessive and/or wasteful defense spending and, the willingness, even at times eagerness, to go to war and support permanent, never-ending wars.

Only 18% of the current Congress has ever served in any branch of our military. Members are afraid if they do not vote for an increase in defense spending, or if they question waste by the military, some demagogue will accuse them of “not supporting the troops.”

It would be a huge understatement to say that I usually do not agree with [New York Times](#) editorials.

But the [Times](#) Editorial Board on Oct. 22 published an editorial entitled “America’s Forever Wars,” pointing out that the U.S. “has been at war continuously since the attacks of 9/11” and now has troops in “at least 172 countries.”

The Board wrote that so far the American people have “seemed to accept” all this militarism, but “it’s a very real question whether, in addition to endorsing these commitments, which have cost trillions of dollars and many lives over 16 years, they will embrace new entanglements...”

The [Times](#) added that the Congress “has spent little time considering such issues in a comprehensive way or debating why all these deployments are needed.”

Backing these words up was a cartoon in the Oct. 25 issue of [Politico](#), a Capitol Hill newspaper. The cartoon showed six senators sitting at a hearing.

The first senator, reading a newspaper, says “Who knew we had troops in Niger?!” The second says: “Heck, we don’t even know how the military budget gets spent.”

Finally, the cartoon shows a senator who looks like Sen. Ted Cruz, saying “War is hell. I say we just give the Pentagon an extra \$80 billion and call it a day.”

[Washington Post](#) columnist Richard Cohen, himself a veteran, wrote on Oct. 23: “But there is something else at work here: the slavish veneration now accorded the military. You can see it every time someone in uniform testifies before Congress.”

Since now less than one percent of the people serve in the military, it may be that many people who never served feel, perhaps even subconsciously, that they must bend over backwards to show their patriotism.

However, it is not unpatriotic to oppose wasteful defense spending or very unnecessary permanent, forever wars.

President Reagan once said “our troops should be committed to combat abroad only as a last resort, when no other choice is available.”

We have far too many leaders today who seem to want to be new Winston Churchills and who are far too eager to send people to war.

No true fiscal conservative could ever justify spending many billions more than even President Trump requested.

Our national debt recently went over the \$20 trillion level. A few days ago, it was reported that the deficit for fiscal 2017 was \$666 billion. This fiscal year, it may be even higher.

Conservatives used to be against huge deficit spending. They also used to be against massive foreign aid. Much of what we have been doing in both Iraq and Afghanistan, training police and farmers, repairing electrical and water systems, even making small business loans, etc., is pure foreign aid.

Many of our foreign interventions have been done under the auspices or authority of the United Nations. Conservatives used to be the biggest critics of the U.N. and world government. Most of our so-called “coalitions” have been funded almost entirely by American taxpayers.

Most interventionists at some point resort to a slur referring to their opponents as isolationists. This is so false. Traditional conservatives support trade and tourism and cultural and educational exchanges with other countries and they agree with helping during humanitarian crises.

They just don’t believe in dragging war out forever, primarily so defense contractors, think tanks, and military bureaucrats can get more money.

One last point: We have far too many officers. In Scott Berg’s biography on Woodrow Wilson, it says during World War I, we had one officer for every 30 enlisted men. Eisenhower once said we had too many officers when there were nine enlisted for every officer. Now we have one officer for only four and a half to five and a half enlisted (varies by branch).

This is very expensive, both for active duty and retirement, but it also makes it much more likely that we will get involved in every little conflict around the world and/or continue basing troops in almost every country.

We simply do not have enough money to pay for defense of so many countries other than our own nor the authority under our Constitution to try to run the whole world.

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(Popular Place continued) My late mother moved here from Iowa after college many years ago, and my father hitchhiked from Scott County to go to UT, so I am glad we let people move in. A recent column in the Washington Times pointed out that most low tax states are growing fast, while “meanwhile states like New York, New Jersey, Illinois and Rhode Island – to name a few – that have followed the liberal playbook on taxes, regulations, energy and labor policies – continue to struggle.” A man who moved to Knoxville from New Jersey told me recently that his sister’s property taxes on a 2500 square foot house in New Jersey were almost \$20,000. I have heard several hundred stories like that as I have travelled our District over the last 30 years. All through the Northeast and Midwest, businesses and people have been moving out and those states have been losing members of the House since it is based on population.

✓ **Liberal Hypocrisy**

For the first time in my almost 30 years in Congress, I have heard liberal big spenders expressing great concern about the national debt. They really were not concerned about the debt. They just want more money coming into the government, and the easiest thing in the world is to spend other people’s money. What we should have done is have spending cuts equal to the tax cuts, but there just were not enough votes from either or both sides to do this. While President Obama once gave a speech when he was in the Senate strongly opposing raising the national debt limit, the debt went from about \$10.6 trillion to just under \$20 trillion, according to the Treasury Department, during his eight years in the White House. Both parties are at fault though. Under President George W. Bush, the debt went up by about \$4.8 trillion during his eight years in office, according to the Treasury Department. Six of the eight years President Clinton was in office, Republicans were in control of Congress, and the debt rose but at a much lower rate. I have always had one of the most fiscally conservative voting records in Congress, because

I thought the debt was far too high at \$3 trillion, as it was when I first came to the U.S. House.

✓ **Foreign Ownership**

In 2013, a Chinese firm paid \$4.7 billion for Smithfield Foods and, as part of the deal, got 146,000 acres of U.S. farmland. According to the Midwest Center for Investigative Reporting, foreign ownership of American farmland doubled between 2004 to 2014 from 13.7 million acres to 27.3 million acres, or about the size of the entire State of Tennessee. Now it is even more. Tim Gibbons of the Missouri Rural Crisis Center told the Des Moines Register last July that he thinks it is “a national security concern” because it means less control over our food system. I am sponsoring along with Sen. Jeff Flake two bills to try to reduce double dipping into farm subsidy programs that have enabled some farmers to get very wealthy by manipulating federal support payments. Also, Sen. Charles Grassley has been leading an effort I also support to end farm subsidy payments to people who are not actually engaged in farming.

✓ **Private Property**

I read several years ago that the federal government and several thousand conservancy groups around the Country were taking over land at the rate of half the size of New Jersey each year. I think and hope this has slowed to some extent, but government at all levels is still taking over too much land. Private property is one of the foundations of both our freedom and our prosperity. People take much better care of their own property than property that is owned by the government. There have been many stories about very wealthy people donating land to a conservancy, receiving a big tax break, and including a provision to preserve the land for themselves and their families. A few years ago, I saw a headline that said “Judge Keeps Land From Development.” It could also have said “Judge Preserves Land For Wealthy,” or “Judge Keeps Young People from Being Able to Buy Homes.” When you take more land off the tax rolls, it makes it harder to give teachers and police raises, and it jams more people

into apartments, townhomes, and houses on postage stamp size lots, and all at greater cost.

✓ **Drones**

My Aviation Subcommittee recently held a hearing about the rapid growth in the number of drones in the U.S. When the Federal Aviation Administration started a drone regulation system in December of 2015, 181,000 registered in the first few weeks. After 15 months, 770,000 had registered and the FAA predicts that the number will be 3.5 million by 2021. This compares to only 320,000 registered manned aircraft, but that system has been in effect for 100 years. I expressed two concerns at this hearing about privacy and danger to other aircraft. Many people are concerned about drones flying over their property, chipping away at what little privacy we have left thanks to all the new technology. In addition, the day before the hearing, the FAA had released new research saying that millions of small civilian drones flying around “can cause significant damage to airliners and business jets in a midair collision.” We need to stay on top of this before this just gets completely out of control.

✓ **Illegal Crossings**

The Washington Times reported recently that illegal border crossings have “tumbled to a 45-year low and interior arrests of illegal immigrants soared in 2017.” These were figures produced by the Department of Homeland Security. The American people are the kindest, most generous people in the world, and the U.S. has allowed far more legal immigration than any other country over the last 50 years. God has blessed every nation with natural resources or natural beauty, or both, that could make every country rich. But corrupt and/or socialist governments have just about destroyed the economies of so many nations. I have read that over half the people in the world have to get by on \$4.00 or less a day. Probably hundreds of millions would come here over the next few years if we simply opened our borders, and our entire infrastructure could not handle such a rapid, massive in-

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flux of people. We need to be much more careful about who is allowed to enter, and I commend President Trump for his leadership on this issue.

✓ **Dangerous Technology**

The September issue of the Atlantic Magazine had a lengthy and troubling article entitled, "Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?" Psychologist Jean M. Twenge wrote about a major national survey showing that teenagers who spend more time than average on screen activities such as social media, texting, and browsing the web are less likely to be happy and have a much higher risk of suicide. She wrote: "If you were going to give advice for a happy adolescence based on this survey, it would be straightforward: Put down the phone, turn off the laptop, and do something – anything – that does not involve a screen." While this article pertained to teens, I think it really applies to everyone. Almost everyone would have better physical and mental health if they would spend less time watching TV and/or staring at computer screens, iPads, smartphones, etc. The Congress needs to hold more hearings on this, and every member needs to speak out and warn more parents about the danger of this technology. If we don't, then many problems this Country is facing are going to grow much worse.

✓ **Big Banks**

Those of us who opposed the Dodd-Frank bill several years ago said it would help the big banks get bigger

and hurt many small ones. That is exactly what happened. Over 1500 banks and credit unions have been forced to merge, be sold, or go out of business altogether since that bill went into effect. Before Dodd-Frank greatly increased federal regulation, the five biggest U.S. banks had 22% of total deposits in this Nation. Now, they have 46.8% of total deposits and assets. Several banks simply did not or do not have the money and huge staffs required to keep up with all the rules, regulations, and red tape. So, we have ended up with the big getting bigger, and once again we see that big government really primarily helps extremely big business and those who work for the government or federal contractors. When my wife and I bought our first house in the 70s, I think we signed about two or three pieces of paper. When we bought a lake house in Grainger County in 2014, I think we signed about 100 pages, most of which did no good whatsoever and simply were make-work for lawyers and bureaucrats.

✓ **Mueller Investigation**

Special Prosecutor Robert Mueller never should have been placed in charge of the investigation he is leading in the first place. Due to his past friendship with former FBI Director James Comey, Mr. Mueller had a definite conflict of interest. Then he hired a team of lawyers who had obvious biases against the President when there were many thousands of lawyers from all over the Country who could have been hired and for whom there would have been no obvious bias or conflict. Now

this investigation is costing taxpayers almost \$1.5 million a month by a very conservative estimate. What a waste. David Keene, an editor at large for the Washington Times, wrote on Dec. 13 that Mueller "like virtually every special prosecutor or independent counsel preceding him, has embarked on a witch hunt that will allow him to brag when it's over that he indicted a bunch of those he went after – even if he never manages to unearth any evidence that the Trump campaign 'colluded' with the Russians."

MY OFFICES:

Washington, DC
2207 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-5435

Knoxville
800 Market Street, Suite 110
Knoxville, TN 37902
Phone: (865) 523-3772

Maryville
331 Court Street
Maryville, TN 37804
Phone: (865) 984-5464

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