

# JAMES LANKFORD



UNITED STATES SENATOR FOR OKLAHOMA

**TO: ALL RESIDENTS OF OKLAHOMA**  
**FROM: GREG SLAVONIC (REAR ADMIRAL NAVY-RETIRED), CHIEF-OF-STAFF, SENATOR LANKFORD**  
**SUBJECT: OFFICE OF SENATOR JAMES LANKFORD 2017 ACTIVITY REPORT**  
**DATE: JANUARY 2, 2018**

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Fellow Oklahomans,

2017 was full of major changes, political news, and major legislative accomplishments in Congress. Senator James Lankford played a major part in a lot of it. There are many real issues facing our nation; throughout the past year, we've made significant progress.

President Trump nominated and the Senate confirmed Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch. The Senate also confirmed 12 Circuit Court judges—the most in any president's first year in office since the creation of Circuit Courts in 1891. These judicial confirmations set a positive direction for our nation's courts for a generation.

Congress also [passed historic tax reform](#) at the end of the year, a restructuring that is long overdue. It has been 30 years since the United States has implemented significant tax reform. For the past four years, the House and Senate have conducted hearings and drafted proposals that led to a tax bill that reduces individual tax rates for all brackets, gives much-needed relief for small businesses, and lowers our tax rate to be competitive with the rest of the world. These cuts and reforms will provide much-needed relief to the American people, while jumpstarting economic growth and creating jobs. Although the unemployment rate has decreased to 4.1%, economic growth is still stagnant; tax reform should help our economy grow at a greater pace.

In this tax bill, Congress also repealed the Obamacare individual mandate, a tax that punished the middle class. More than 81% of the people who paid the Obamacare penalty in Oklahoma make less than \$50,000 a year, including many low-income Oklahoma families.

Using the Congressional Review Act (CRA), Congress took major action on rolling back 15 major burdensome and onerous regulations—the most ever repealed under the CRA law. This is a major benefit for families and small businesses throughout Oklahoma who often end up paying the cost of complying with those regulations through a higher price for goods and services.

Last year, we also led the way in defending our nation against threats around the world and here at home. The military had success against ISIS in the Middle East, and Congress passed major sanctions against the abusive regimes in Iran, North Korea, and Russia. The administration also recognized [Jerusalem as Israel's capital](#), a move that has long had bipartisan support.

In 2017, Senator Lankford introduced and sponsored several pieces of important legislation that became law. He joined lead-sponsor Senator Jim Inhofe to introduce the [Enhancing Veterans Care Act](#) (S. 1266), which was signed by the President. This law will give VA Directors more managerial flexibility, including who they can hire and fire at VA Centers. This year, the President nominated and the Senate confirmed Scott Palk as a federal judge for the Western District of Oklahoma and Trent Shores and Brian Kuester as

US Attorneys for Oklahoma—all nominees suggested by Senators Lankford and Inhofe. The Department of Justice adopted Lankford's [proposal to end the misuse of regulatory guidance directives](#), and the Department of Education adopted Lankford's [request to end the misuse of regulatory guidance directives for colleges](#). Lankford also sponsored [H.J. Res 43](#), a CRA that reversed President Obama's Health and Human Services Title X regulation to force states to fund Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers.

Senator Lankford also released his third annual government waste report entitled, "[Federal Fumbles: 100 ways the government dropped the ball](#)," which identified \$473.6 billion in wasteful and inefficient federal spending. More importantly, Lankford was successful in eliminating government waste from previous years' reports, like reforms for the [Lifeline Program](#), also called the "free cell phone program," and the [Department of Justice slush fund](#), among many others.

Early in 2018, Congress must still address Veterans Choice, infrastructure, budget, immigration, and much more. Senator Lankford and our team stand ready to serve all Oklahomans. Please reach out to us if you need anything. Here is some additional information about Senator Lankford's work in 2017:

#### Traveling the Sooner State:

- Visited 21 counties and 4 military bases
- Held 59 state listening events, community conversations, town halls, and roundtables
- Visited 7 schools and college campuses

#### Constituent Service to Oklahomans:

- Assisted Oklahomans with 2,200 federal process-related constituent service cases
- Processed 555 veteran and military constituent cases, 307 Social Security constituent cases, and 82 Medicare and healthcare-related cases

#### Connecting with Oklahomans in DC:

- Held 102 policy meetings with constituents in Washington, DC
- Responded to approximately 135,000 pieces of constituent mail, emails, phone calls, and faxes
- Welcomed 831 Oklahomans at weekly "[Java with James](#)" coffee open house receptions

#### Legislative Activities:

- Attended 166 committee hearings and meetings
- Chaired 7 Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management hearings and roundtables:
  - Hearings: Improving Small Business Input on Federal Regulations: Ideas for Congress and a New Administration; Empowering Managers: Ideas for a More Effective Federal Workforce; Agency Use of Science in the Rulemaking Process: Proposals for Improving Transparency and Accountability; Agency Approaches to Reorganization: Examining OMB's Memorandum on the Federal Workforce; Examining OMB's Memorandum on the Federal Workforce, Part II: Expert Views on OMB's Ongoing Government-wide Reorganization; and Improving Oversight of the Regulatory Process: Lessons from State Legislatures (ROUNDTABLE: Case Studies in Personnel Management Reform in Federal Agencies)
- Bills introduced:
  - (H.J. Res 43) Congressional Review Act to HHS Title X requirements \*signed into law\*
  - (S. 264) Free Speech Fairness Act
  - (S. 301) Conscience Protection Act of 2017
  - (S. 317) Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act \*passed House & Senate Committee\*
  - (S. 333) Stop Settlement Slush Funds Act of 2017 \*enacted through agency action\*

- (S. 386) Judgment Fund Transparency and Terrorism Financing Prevention Act of 2017
- (S. 1133) Patient Access to Higher Quality Health Care Act of 2017
- (S. 584) Small Business Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act
- (S. 1512) Transparency and Honesty in Energy Regulations Act of 2017
- (S. 1887) Direct Hire of Students and Recent Graduates Act of 2017
- (S. 2123) Universal Charitable Giving Act of 2017
- (S. 2261) Secure Elections Act
- Bills co-sponsored: (below are just a few)
  - (S. 343) RESPECT Act \*passed the Senate\*
  - (S. 684) National Adoption and Foster Care Home Study Act
  - (S. 1145) Truth in Settlements Act of 2017
  - (S. 1342) Eliminating Federal Tax Subsidies for Stadiums Act of 2017
  - (S. 782) PROTECT Our Children Act of 2017 \*signed into law\*
  - (S. 1266) Enhancing Veteran Care Act \*signed into law\*
  - (S. 943) Johnson-O'Malley Supplemental Indian Education Program Modernization Act
  - (S. 1823) Federal Disaster Assistance Nonprofit Fairness Act of 2017
  - (S. 1311) Abolish Human Trafficking Act of 2017 \*passed Senate\*
  - (S. 1852) SUCCEED Act
  - (S. 1894) A bill to exempt Puerto Rico from the Jones Act
  - (S. 1922) Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act

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