

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 BIENNIAL ACTIVITY REPORT
DATE: July 11, 2016

Oklahomans,

It is my pleasure to present this report to the people of Oklahoma to highlight some of the accomplishments and activities of Senator James Lankford during the first six months of this year.

During 2015, the new Republican-controlled Senate accomplished a lot, including the lifting of [the oil export ban](#), Medicare SGR reform, anti-human trafficking legislation, and the [repeal of 'No Child Left Behind' education standards](#) – which were all signed into law. The Senate also passed legislation to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline, repeal the EPA Waters of the US rule, and agree on the first Budget Resolution in both the House and Senate in more than 10 years. Unfortunately, the President vetoed those measures, yet we continue to focus on the work at hand.

During the first half of 2016, the Senate continued their active schedule and continued an open amendment and voting process. The Senate has considered 231 amendments, of which 205 passed. The Senate Appropriations Committee, of which Senator Lankford serves on, has passed all 12 bills out of Committee for the second straight year. Last year was the first time all bills had been approved in committee since 2009.

Also this year, the Senate passed a comprehensive [bill to combat the tragic opioid drug epidemic](#) in America, and we're hopeful it will be signed into law this year. The Senate passed the Permanent Internet Tax Freedom Act, which prohibits any state or local government from imposing taxes on internet access. Senator Lankford also [pushed the Obama administration to change citizenship tests](#) to list our right of 'freedom of religion' rather than just 'freedom of worship.' This important distinction reflects our constitutional right to live a life of faith at all times, rather than just 'worship,' which is confined to a time and space. In March, Lankford was [honored to speak at the largest conference](#) in America for conservative activism. He spoke on the issue of religious freedom. The Senate also passed and placed an [Obamacare repeal bill](#) on the President's desk, as well as a Planned Parenthood defunding bill. No surprise, but President Obama vetoed both bills.

The sluggish economy has really hurt Congress' ability to reduce our massive federal debt. Despite the worst recovery in 60 years and historically poor underemployment, the Republican-controlled Congress has cut the annual deficit by nearly \$1 trillion (from \$1.4 trillion to \$534 billion this year). However, we still have a very long way to go, and Lankford is committed to seeing more done to cut the debt. That is why Lankford released a federal government waste report, last year, entitled, "[Federal Fumbles: 100 ways the government dropped the ball](#)," which listed \$105 billion in wasteful federal spending, and about \$800 billion in negative regulatory impact to the economy. Look out for our next report this fall!

In Oklahoma, Lankford continues to travel the state when he's not in Washington, DC. He has visited 56 out of the state's 77 counties since becoming a Senator; 20 of those counties were visited this year. He's also held 34 constituent events, townhalls and roundtables.

Constituent service continues to be a priority, as we have responded to approximately 20,000 pieces of constituent mail, emails, and faxes. There is no constituent problem too small that we won't try to address. For example, we were able to help one couple deal with tax fraud issues and a \$7,000 tax bill related to a stolen identity three years earlier. Their identities and tax returns were verified, filing errors were corrected, and the couple received a \$2600 refund. In another case, a retired veteran had not received his retirement benefit in over 15 years. With our assistance, we were able to determine he was eligible, locate his misplaced personnel file, and get him backpay along with his monthly check. In another case, a veteran coming off of active duty with significant medical concerns contacted our office. We were able to

get him connected to the VA hospital and medical specialists for his care. We were also able to get his VA claim and hospital care resolved within two weeks of being medically released from active duty.

If there is ever anything we can do to help you, please contact any of our offices in Oklahoma or in Washington, DC.

Here is some additional information about the first six months of 2016:

Constituent Service to Oklahomans:

- Assisted Oklahomans with nearly 900 federal-processing related constituent service cases.
- Processed about 315 veterans and military constituent cases, about 160 citizenship-related constituent cases, about 130 social security constituent cases, and about 50 Medicare and healthcare-related cases.

Traveling the Sooner State:

- Visited 20 counties and 1 military base (McAlester Army Ammunition Plant)
 - Total visited as Senator (since January 2015): 56 counties and 4 military bases
- Visited 3 college campuses: Northeastern State University, Oklahoma Wesleyan University, and Oklahoma Christian University
 - Total visited as Senator (since January 2015): 11 colleges
- Held 34 state listening events, townhalls and roundtables.

Connecting with Oklahomans in DC:

- Held 106 policy meetings with constituents in Washington, DC
- Responded to approximately 20,000 pieces of constituent mail, emails, and faxes
- Welcomed over 500 Oklahomans at weekly "[Java with James](#)" coffee open house receptions

Legislative Activities:

- Attended over 140 committee hearings and meetings
- Chaired 6 committee hearings and roundtables:
 - Hearings: Examining the Use of Agency Regulatory Guidance, Part II; Examining Agency Discretion in Setting and Enforcing Regulatory Fines and Penalties; The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act: Opportunities for Improvement to Support State and Local Governments; Examining Agency Use of Deference, Part II; and Examining Due Process in Administrative Hearings. (ROUNDTABLE: Improving the USAJOBS Website)
- Examples of Appropriations provisions secured by Lankford:
 - State, Foreign Operations Appropriations Iran Payments Oversight – Requires the Obama Administration to provide more details on its \$1.7 billion legal settlement payment to Iran in January. The payment was made to cover the sale of military equipment prior to the Iranian revolution.
 - State, Foreign Operations Appropriations Natural Gas Exports – Encourages State Department to facilitate natural gas exports to Ukraine to lessen its dependence on Russian energy.
 - Energy and Water Development Appropriations National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Oversight – Requires NNSA to routinely assess performance on major projects in an effort to identify problems in cost and timeline estimates early and streamline project management.
- Bills/Amendments Introduced: 7
 - (S.2798) Free Market Flights Act of 2016
 - (S.2927) Conscience Protection Act of 2016
 - (S.2966) District of Columbia Judicial Financial Transparency Act *passed committee*
 - (S.2972) Grant Reform and New Transparency (GRANT) Act *passed committee*
 - (S.3050) Stop Settlements Slush Fund Act of 2016
 - (S.RES.348) Resolution supporting efforts to place a woman on US currency
 - (S.RES.414) Resolution supporting the reimposition of sanctions on Iran if they violate the nuclear deal
- Bills co-sponsored: 21 (below are just a few)
 - (S.2554) Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability Act of 2016 (introduced by Sen. Inhofe)
 - (S.2646) Veterans Choice Improvement Act of 2016
 - (S.2724) Separation of Powers Restoration Act of 2016
 - (S.2736) Patient Access to Durable Medical Equipment Act of 2016
 - (S.2740) A bill to prohibit the transfer of GITMO detainees to state sponsors of terrorism
 - (S.3034) Protecting Internet Freedom Act