

I am honored to have the opportunity to listen to your priorities as the 111th Congress closes and the 112th Congress prepares to assume the responsibilities of leadership.

For too long, members of Congress have put their personal agendas ahead of the Constitution they have sworn to uphold. Many have chosen to spend tax dollars without regard for the future. That must end.

In the 112th Congress, I will be a voice for serious reform in Washington. I believe that government must be smaller, more transparent and less expensive.

I am reminded of an illustration that free-market economist Milton Friedman used. He noted that there are four ways money can be spent: you can spend your own money on yourself, you can spend your own money on someone else, you can spend someone else's money on yourself or you can spend someone else's money on someone else. Clearly, we all spend most efficiently when we are in the first category. Congress fits in that last category - and because Congress is always spending someone else's money on someone else, it rarely uses your tax dollars efficiently.

That's why I always try to remember that I *am* voting to spend my own money - my tax dollars and those of my children as well as yours. It's why I want you to hold me accountable for the way I spend your hard-earned money. And that's why I want to make sure you keep as much of your money as possible.

Looking ahead, I fully expect that the Speaker of the House will call the 111th Congress back into session one more time. Should that occur, I will oppose any attempts to use a "lame duck" Congress to pass a legislative agenda that is out of step with the priorities of the American people. During the next Congress, which will begin in January, I look forward to pushing back the big government agenda of this administration and advancing simple, conservative solutions to the real problems Americans face.

CONSTITUENT CORNER

November is here. The air is crisp. The changed leaves are falling. Thanksgiving will soon be here. Many of us are thinking of enjoying the holidays with our families and friends.

November is also National Adoption Month. It is a time for celebrating parents who choose to open their hearts to a child who does not have a forever family. According to the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#)

, 115,000 children in foster care are waiting for a permanent home. Information on adoption in Missouri is available

[here](#)

. However you have built your family, this is a wonderful month for encouraging an adoptive parent you know.