

## Just like any other ordinary Wednesday

By: Congressman Tim Huelskamp

In many respects, Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2012 will be like any other day. The federal government will borrow about 40 cents out of every dollar it spends. Washington bureaucrats will remain unaware of and unconcerned about the economic and cultural consequences of their rules and regulations. Millions of Americans will remain out of work because of the tax and regulatory uncertainty scaring small businesses from taking risks to invest and hire new employees. And yet, many politicians in Washington are apparently fine with all of this even though most of the Americans they represent are not.

Jan. 18 will also be like the 993 other days before it in that the Senate leadership will have failed still to pass a budget. The following Tuesday will mark the 1,000th day since the Senate last passed a budget. It is little wonder why Congress has an 11 percent approval rating; one chamber cannot even manage to complete such a crucial task. On top of that, the Senate will likely continue to ignore more than two dozen House-passed measures to help spur private sector job creation.

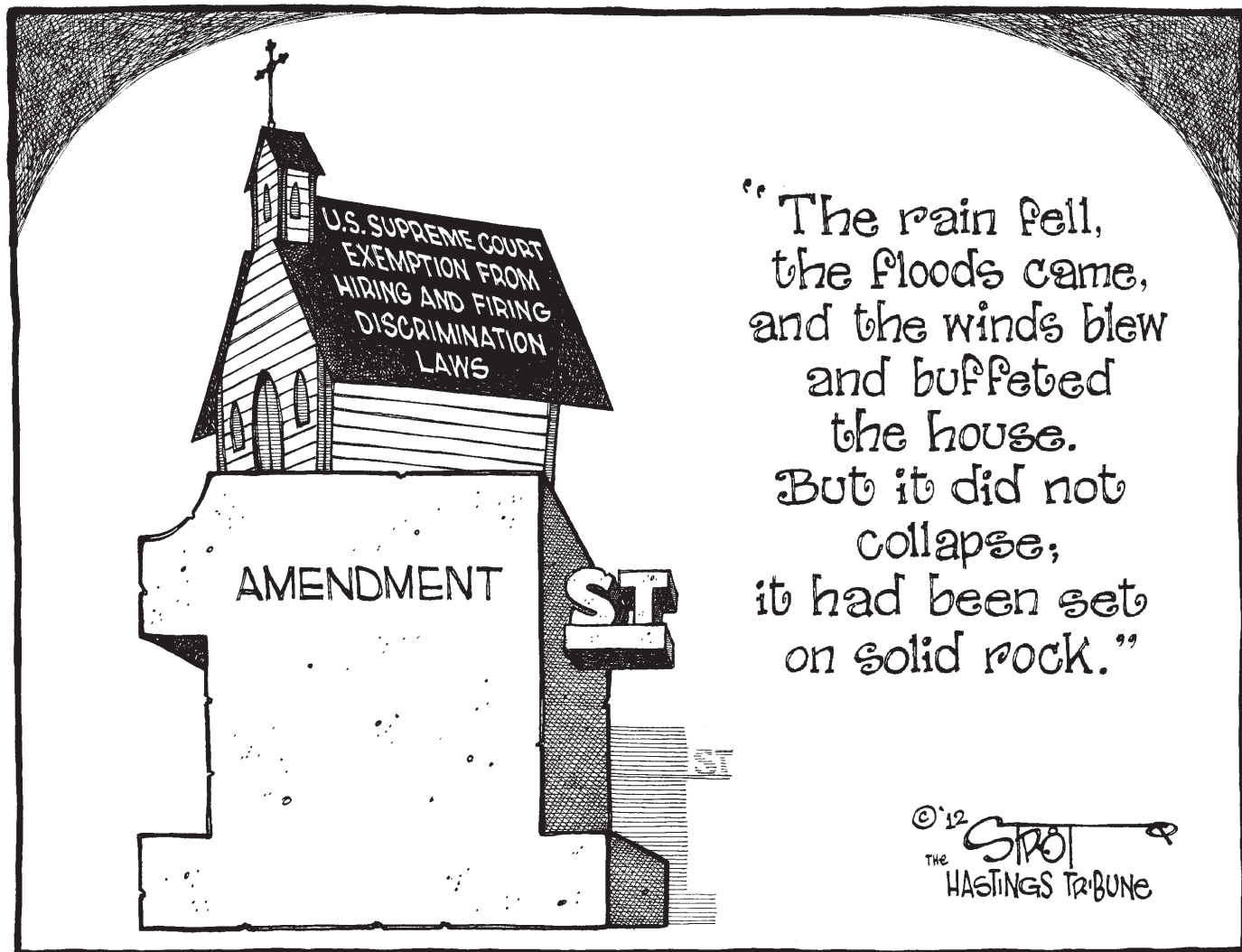
Also on Jan. 18, the House will vote on a "Resolution of Disapproval" to state its opposition to fulfilling the President's most recent request for a \$1.2 trillion increase in the nation's debt limit. As a condition of the August 2011 debt deal, the President is automatically granted this additional debt unless majorities of both chambers object. If both chambers were to resist, then the President could veto the resolution and two-thirds of each chamber would have to override the veto.

Given the Senate's unwillingness to pass a budget for nearly 1,000 days, it is unlikely the Senate will disapprove of this automatic debt limit increase either. Though the House likely will object to the debt increase, it is unfortunate that this is the only existing recourse to prevent the President from obtaining another \$1.2 trillion in debt – debt to be repaid by our children and grandchildren. With this increase the President will have received \$2.1 trillion in new debt since August and more than \$5 trillion in his first three years, bringing the grand total America owes to \$16.2 trillion. Yet, no substantial and meaningful cuts have come to fruition. Don't hold your breath for them to manifest, either.

How can Congress fix this situation? First, we cannot back down from the planned spending reductions. The debt deal outlined cuts to take place over the course of the next decade. There are some who think those reductions need to be put on hold. Second, those spending cuts should be larger. The next decade is just cuts to growth in spending; we need to dig deeper and actually reduce the bottom line. Third, we need to address the problems with revenue. Our tax code is a mess. There is a problem when about half of Americans contribute nothing in income taxes whatsoever while 1 percent pay more than a third of the total income tax revenue.

Jan. 18 will unfortunately be like most other days, but Jan. 19 and every day after it can and should be different. Every man, woman, and child – each of whom shoulders more than \$50,000 of the nation's debt – can wait no longer for Washington to reduce spending and stop adding to the debt once and for all.

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## How the go to girl gets things done

In addition to my title of "Domestic Diva", I have earned the title of "The Goddess of Go-Fer". That's because when my husband is working on a job more than 20 miles from home he, inevitably, forgets something. I have to "go fer it."

When Caller ID reveals Jim's cell phone number after being gone about an hour, I automatically grab my purse and head for the door. But not until I learn if the trip will include a stop at a hardware store or merely a rummage through his tool bin. The tool bin is easy: after 17 years of marriage to a carpenter I am able to recognize most tools. The hardware store run, however, is different.

Experience has taught me to have Jim call the store; describe (in detail) what he wants; and advise them that I will be there in half an hour. That's the approximate time we live from a hardware store, in any direction.

You see, I've learned from experience not to go to the hardware store for parts unless Jim has called them first. That way I can walk in (with confidence); pick up the bag, box or crate of aforementioned parts; and leave with my dignity intact.

Just like a man should not be allowed to buy paint for their home without a

### Out Back Carolyn Plotts



note from his wife – neither should wives attempt to pick up parts for their husbands without detailed descriptions. I have gone into a hardware store with a picture drawn on a jagged piece of sheetrock or a scrap of 2 X 4 and a note about size and width only to be interrogated by one of the clerks. "Is that a right or a left hand thread? Is it 1-10 or 2-20? Does he want laminate or solid? Is this for metal or plastic? How many pounds/inches/buckets/pieces does he need? Is that interior or exterior?" Then they get really personal and ask, "Is that male or female?" How should I know? We weren't formerly introduced.

I have come up with a solution, though. When Jim calls and starts with, "Sweetheart.....guess what I forgot?" I stop him right there. "Whoa, Big Fella." I say. "Have you called the hardware store yet? No? Well, call me back when you have. You know I'm not going in there until you have

called them and they are clear on what it is I'm picking up. Uh,uh, uh. Call them. You remember what happened last time I went in before you called. I refuse to leave another store in tears. It's humiliating." So, that's my story and I'm stickin' to it.

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Winter weather has taken a hiatus and spring-like temperatures have prevailed the last few days. My laying hens are confused. In a good way.

Chickens are like most animals. During severe weather they conserve all their energy and use it to keep warm. Therefore egg production slows way down. During cold weather I'm lucky to find three eggs in the nests, and I better get to them within the hour they are laid or they'll have to thaw in a bucket of water.

I've had to tell my regular egg customers, "Not today. Maybe tomorrow." But this warmer weather has put the hens into "over-drive" and I'm running out of room for egg storage in the fridge. The old girls are kicking out more than a dozen a day. That's more than enough to allow me to sell a dozen, here and there, plus make deviled eggs, custard pie or potato salad anytime I want. Guess it's time to hang out my "Eggs For Sale" sign.



Thumbs up to the Prairie Dog State Park Toby, Brian and Diedre, Longspur Chapter of Pheasants Forever members and Endzone, (and whoever else I missed) for making the Youth hunt on January 14th so much fun and educational for the kids who participated. Spending the morning with my sons and other hunters reminded me how much I enjoyed hunting in my youth and also gave me a chance to recall important information that I had forgotten from my gun safety classes years ago. Thank you. Emailed in.

## Kansas will celebrate its birthday soon

This Jan. 29, our state will be 151 years old. Kansas was admitted to the Union two and a half months before the beginning of the Civil War – one of our nation's most terrible times.

It's important to recall our heritage, our roots and a bit of our state's history, especially in celebration of another Kansas birthday.

The war between the northern and southern states officially began on April 12, 1861, after the shelling of Fort Sumter. The Kansas territory had been at war for years before it was officially admitted on Jan. 29, 1861, one year after Abraham Lincoln was elected president.

As a result of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, the Missouri Compromise was overturned. That meant Kansas did not have to enter the Union as a slave state or a free state. The people of the Kansas territory were free to answer the slavery question on their own. This was called, "self-determination," and once a state, Kansas could decide its own destiny.

This was a period of bloody battles and fighting as both proslavery forces and abolitionists flocked into the Kansas territory. Both sides were determined to tip the balance of Congress in their favor. The term, "Bleeding Kansas," aptly described the tension and

### Insight John Schlageck



bloodshed of that period.

Sixty-six years later, during a much better period in our state's history, state legislators adopted our flag. This flag depicts a history of peaceful coexistence between the natives of the land and the newly arrived settlers.

Like so many other states, the flag is the state seal set on a field of dark blue. In the foreground of the seal is a farmer plowing his field. A little further up is a wagon train with oxen-drawn schooners headed westward. Beyond these pioneers are Native Americans hunting bison.

The pioneers in the Kansas flag represent Manifest Destiny. This was the prevailing attitude of the United States government starting in the 1840s. The farmer and his field represent Kansas' rich agricultural heritage. The seal also includes a steamboat churning its way down the Kansas River and was meant to represent commerce. Today, agriculture, manufacturing and service industries play an integral part of the

Kansas economy.

Above the plains in the state seal are rolling hills and above them, 34 stars representing Kansas's entry into the United States' expanding family of states. Above the stars is the state motto, Ad Astra per Aspera, Latin for "To the Stars Through Difficulties." This is a tribute to the original settlers who dreamed so grandly when they left their homes and moved westward.

Just above the seal is the state crest, a sunflower above a bar of blue and gold. The sunflower is the state flower, and the blue and gold represent the Louisiana Purchase, which made the lands of Kansas a part of the United States. Beneath the state seal is the word Kansas in large, yellow block letters.

Kansas has several nicknames including the Sunflower State, Jayhawk State and the Wheat State. Our state is located in the Heartland, in fact Lebanon is the town situated closest to the geographical center of the continental United States.

Kansas agriculture is proud to be part of this rich rural heritage of putting food on people's plates and helping feed the world. This state's farmers and ranchers wish our Wheat State a happy birthday Jan. 29.

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