



# Arise and Shine, Missouri lawmakers: You Have Nothing to Lose but a Long History of Bad Performance.

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*By: Andrew B. Wilson*

What's wrong with you, Missouri lawmakers? Why so weak and feckless?

This is your conscience calling. I speak to all of you who call yourselves conservatives – the champions of limited government and economic freedom. Another year has come and gone and what do you have to show for it? “Too damned little,” I say, given super-majorities in both houses of the Legislature and control of the executive branch as well.

Look at what has just happened in the U.S. Congress. With far narrower majorities than you have in the Missouri Legislature, your counterparts on the national stage passed the most important pro-growth tax policy in many years – cutting the corporate income tax to 21 from 35 percent while also allowing businesses to write off the full costs of new equipment to improve operations and enhance productivity. In addition, under the new legislation, middle-income taxpayers will pay about \$900 less in their 2018 tax bill than they would under the current law, according to the Tax Policy Center.

Though I may sound critical, I really do want you to succeed – for nothing is gained if you continue to ignore the chastisements of your often-troubled but ever-hopeful conscience. Here are my New Year's Resolutions for you going into the 2018 session of the Missouri Legislature –

One, don't be afraid to think big and act boldly. For almost three decades, Missouri has been one of the slowest-growing states in the nation. That alone should tell you that a major course correction is in order – and long overdue.

Two, say “No” to corporate welfare. Slaughter the fatted calves of tax credits for economic development (eliminating as much as \$400 million in annual state expenditures).

Three, use those savings to lower taxes for all Missourians – both individuals and businesses.

Four, deregulate, deregulate, deregulate. Nationally, the undoing of many of the regulatory excesses from the Obama administration helped to power 3-percent-plus GDP growth in the second and third quarters. Further deregulation at the state and local government levels in Missouri can have a similarly beneficial effect. The governor's *No MO Red Tape* initiative looks like a big step in the right direction.

Five, and this is a plea that is meant not just for lawmakers, but for who believe in the power of free markets: Do not shirk debate and, still more, do not shrink from the important task of ridding young people of the pernicious idea (widely accepted at colleges and universities in Missouri and across the country) that free-market capitalism is an evil system that promotes social injustice.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Free-market capitalism under limited (as opposed to wide-ranging) government is the *only* economic system that spreads opportunity far and wide and that reliably delivers both growth and prosperity to the many and not just the few.

To you lawmakers, I say, in closing: Good luck on ringing in the New Year with the strength and conviction that come from knowing that you are capable of achieving great things.

*This op-ed also appeared in th [Joplin Globe](#).*

## About the Author



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