

John Block Reports from Washington
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“The To Do List”

Hello everybody out there in farm country. This radio commentary is brought to you by the National Corn Growers Association and CropLife America. They are friends, supporters, and allies of a healthy farm economy and prosperous rural America. Thank you.

And now for today’s commentary—

September is here. Labor Day is behind us. The To Do list in this town by the end of the month is a heavy lift. First, we have disaster relief for those devastated by Hurricane Harvey. But we have to raise the debt ceiling to have the money to help. In fact, we have to raise the debt ceiling so we can borrow more money to avoid default and keep the government open. The Congress has a miserable 12% approval rating and President Trump is at 36%, according to a CBS poll. Can they get all of this done?

Also, I must put on the table tax reform. President Trump is already out on the speaking circuit. He is challenging Congress to get it done. He says tax reform is pro-growth Reagan style.

The priority is to reduce business tax rates to encourage U.S. companies to bring back home the billions and billions of dollars they hide overseas. Simplify the Tax Code; get rid of the loopholes.

“Tax relief for middle income Americans. Keep jobs in American, create jobs in America.” Trump’s words.

Seven out of 10 voters say passing tax reform should be a top priority. It is very popular with farmers and small businesses. However, we know it will not be easy. We have one powerful force helping us. If Members of Congress and even the President want to get reelected, they need to take care of business.

There is something going on behind the scenes that Robert Samuelson shines a light on in the *Washington Post* – growing confidence and optimism. It can provide the lift that we need.

In 2006, before the recession, 60% of Americans identified themselves as middle class. With the recession, optimism collapsed, but now we are back. 62% feel they are middle class and rising. The American Enterprise Institute says, “We’re back economically.” 59% of people say jobs are plentiful. In 2010, only 10% felt that way. Trump has convinced most workers that their jobs are safe and will not be outsourced abroad.

Although the official government report says that worker earnings are up just 2% from a year ago, economists at the San Francisco Federal Reserve believe that they may be up nearly 4%. If that is true, it might help to explain the growing optimism.

The To Do list is challenging, and I’m not even talking about North Korea.

If you would like to review my radio shows going back more than 20 years, just go on-line to www.johnblockreports.com. Have a great weekend.

Stay tuned.

Until next week, I am John Block from Washington.