

Opinion

— LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

Restore veterans' 2A rights

To the Editor:
When I was 19 my country gave me a used M14 and quite a bit of ammunition free and they even gave me \$55 extra a month to shoot at some people. The ammo supply was usually adequate but just in case it wasn't they gave me a foot long knife to attach to the end of my rifle barrel. I survived and came home and now I go to the Veteran's hospital in Boise for medical treatment.

Things have changed. Evidently some people, who I suspect were not veterans wrote some laws and I am greeted by one of them in great big letters as I enter the VA grounds that promise a year in jail should I possess a weapon. The practical effect of that is that even though I am a veteran and a non-criminal I have to travel 168 miles one way unarmed because my final destination is the VA. Inside I am greeted with some more signs that I don't quite know how to take. Maybe they are for comic relief or maybe they are just some more of well-meaning liberal stuff, probably one of the war protesters at Berkley or Haight and Ashbury finally graduated and got a government job. It reads "for your protection no guns or knives are allowed." How the world has changed. Combat veterans remember relying on guns and knives for protection and would like to have one in our personal cars instead of relying on leftist signs.

I did mention this to Greg Waldon in one of his town meetings and he took notes but I am still waiting to see if does any good to elect a Republican when it comes to rolling back the liberal gun agenda. It sure would be nice to see some push back in Oregon when Ginny Burdick drops 5 or 6 gun bills in the legislature but Oregon's law making body is decidedly short of any veteran perspective, both on the state and federal levels.

I would like to see a "Veteran's Second Amendment Restoration Act" introduced in this congress and become an issue during the 2016 election cycle. It probably won't get a lot of traction, until ISIS shows the left wing that you can be attacked here, right in your shopping malls and maybe even at a VA hospital. The idea that those who fought them over there might be attacked here for revenge is not inconceivable. And like they say, "When seconds count the police are only minutes away."

Steve Culley
Richland

I support John George's stance

To the Editor:
I support John George's (of Forest Access for All) stated concerns and give him credit, when credit is due. I refer to his letter to the editor and reference documents:

The "Tidwell Brief" discusses governments working together in coordination, you won't find the word "cooperation!"

FS requesting County Governments to sign any "cooperating" "Memorandum of Understanding" is to dismiss any conflicts rather than address a coordinated effort to solve conflicts and work for the mutual benefit of natural resource uses by all.

Baker County Commissioners Bill Harvey, Mark Bennett and Tim Kerns are "on the right track" refusing to sign away County and State rights fought hard for by Baker county residents.

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Plain and simple, presenting and requesting Counties sign their MOU, giving USFS total control, is sneaky and not at all abiding by their own direction as explained in the "Tidwell Brief!"

I Googled "Federal Resource Advisory Committees" and found Eastern Oregon is sorely lacking theirs! Who is out there to champion the people's welfare in sustaining our future existence as viable communities with access to renewable forest resources; continued traditions of recreation, hunting, fishing, ranching, mining; and enjoying access to our historic cultural resources, those traces of human existence that we treasure for reminding us who we are and why these resources are of our concern! Those are the ties that bind us to these public lands now and always.

There is conflict in our Blue Mountain Forests. It was my understanding a "mythical god" known to me as a "Seven County Coalition in Eastern Oregon" took time to hear the public, and took time to respond with concerns, no, the Blue Mountain Forest Plan Revision DEIS does not meet County plans.

Hard work you'd throw away, then demand the FS provides counties a future, through developing and following coordinated resource plans between governments, County & Federal.

I will continually thank John for his professional and personal dedication to Eastern Oregon's public lands access and support to concerned citizens. Concerned outspoken individuals deserve to be commended, not ridiculed for their honesty, integrity, and forward thinking ways to see coordinated government service for the benefit of the counties, now and always!

Betty Duncan
Unity

Coordinate, not cooperate

To the Editor:

First of all I would like to thank the County Commissioners from Baker and Wallowa counties for sticking up for its citizens and rejecting the Forest Service's attempt at getting them to sign a Cooperation Agreement trading their rights just for a seat at the table.

I hope the rest of the counties that are involved in the Blue Mountain Revision will take a hard look at what the two above counties have done to protect the rights of the county. Ask your Commissioners to give the Baker and Wallowa County Commissioners a call and find out why they made the stand that they did.

Wednesday was a meeting day for most County Commissioners and I am sure that some of them made a decision one way or another. People out there concerned about losing their roads need to call or email their respective County Commissioners and ask about just where they intend to take the county. If it is anything but "Coordination" get ready for a big loss of roads in your county.

It is crunch time we either stand our ground or lose a major portion of your roads and trails access. Be proactive and go to the Commissioner's meetings, make an appointment with them, email or text them. The Tribes said it all, no Cooperation for them, it is government to government using coordination, why not us, don't we deserve the same as the Tribes?

Chuck Chase
Baker City

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— GUEST OPINION —

A tone-deaf budget that will never, ever balance

By Raul Labrador

This week, President Obama complied with his legal duty to submit a budget to Congress.

But his \$4 trillion blueprint for fiscal year 2016 falls recklessly short of our government's obligation to live within its means and begin paying off the \$18 trillion debt.

The president proposed an audacious tax, spend and borrow scheme that would balloon our debt to \$26 trillion by 2025. We were \$10.6 trillion in the hole when he took office.

Rather than offering tax reform to level the playing field and boost the economy, the president wants to raise taxes by \$2.1 trillion over a decade.

He wants to increase spending by \$2.4 trillion, a 7 percent increase next year and a 65 percent jump in 10 years.

This abdication of responsibility is at the heart of why so many Americans have all but given up on Washington.

Even the president's allies are skeptical. The left-leaning Tax Policy Center, a joint venture of the Urban Institute and Brookings Institution, debunks Obama's claim that his budget will help the middle class.



Submitted Photo

Congressman Raul Labrador represents the first district of Idaho

"The proposal would have very little net impact on middle-income households," says the Tax Policy Center. The middle 20 percent of households — making between \$49,000 and \$84,000 — would see their annual after-tax incomes drop by an average of \$7, according to the center.

The president has boasted of providing "a little bit of a cushion" for working families. More like a Whoopie cushion, now available at Target for \$3.

Idahoans sent me to Congress to end unsustainable government growth. In the new Congress, I'll be joining my colleagues in making the hard choices necessary to get us back on track.

Only by restraining government, bringing fairness to the Tax Code and reducing regulatory burdens will we unleash American innovation and improve our standard of living across the spectrum.

— EDITORIAL —

The Kitz Situation

On Wednesday, Secretary of State Kate Brown rushed out of a meeting in D.C. and flew back to Salem. Brown is next in line for the governorship should Kitzhaber take a bow.

At this same time, elected officials on both sides of the aisle, as well as those we know on the "inside" in Salem began calling to say they expected a resignation from Governor John Kitzhaber within 24 hours. Then Kitzhaber issued a statement that he planned to cling to his position for dear life. (Okay, we paraphrased a bit there.)

Now, his alleged criminal offenses and those of his shack-up honey, Sylvia Hayes, were outed back before the election, and while more evidence has been uncovered, the accusations haven't changed all that much.

So why would a newspaper like *The Or-*

egonian wait until now to ask Kitzhaber to step down? They knew what he was when they endorsed him just three months ago. Our theory is that if they had denounced Kitzhaber prior to the election, Republican Dennis Richardson would surely have been elected, and his conservative ideals fly in the face of all that makes that paper—well, that paper.

It's safer for liberal media to come out against the embattled governor now that he's been elected because if he is removed or resigns, ultra-liberal Brown will take his place. And then all will remain comfy in the world of western Oregon media.

There's no questioning the power of incumbency, and once in office for 18 months before facing off against a challenger in a forced 2016 election, Brown would gain an advantage likely impossible to overcome.

The recall effort currently against Kitzhaber is politically misguided for conservatives as well, and for the same reasons. If successful, it will have the same effect as a resignation.

We say leave Kitz in office as long as possible, let all his dirty laundry come out into the light of day, and see if Portland voters get nice and sick of him. Maybe then they'll vote a little wiser.

—*The Baker County Press Editorial Board*

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