

O P I N I O N



Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.

To the Editor:

When *The Nugget* editorialized against city planner Eric Porter's unilateral approval of food carts at Eurosports, it used the phrase "beggars belief"; that same phrase came to mind when I read planning commissioner Alan Holzman's defense of Porter's action.

In addition to claiming that a planning commission review of Porter's action wasn't necessary, he goes on to state that the application completely and totally follows city code. Contrast this with information from Mike Morgan to the city councilors and planning commissioners showing how the application is in significant conflict with several areas of city code.

Should Mr. Morgan's analysis be upheld, Mr. Holzman (should) resign his position on the planning commission.

Ray Kenny

♦ ♦ ♦

To the Editor:

Sen. Ron Wyden — The law that authorized the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) 50 years ago is set to expire by September 30, 2015, unless Congress takes affirmative action before then. We applaud your support for S.338, authorizing the renewal and full funding of this important program, as it provides invaluable financial resources for state parks and local recreational facilities. A few examples of the important projects slated for our immediate area are improvements to Tumalo State Park, the Village Green Park in Sisters, and the Crooked River Wetlands Park in Prineville. These are the types of projects that clearly enhance the quality of life for

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Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Sunny 42/29	Chance freezing rain 44/32	Chance freezing rain 46/34	Rain likely 47/32	Chance rain 46/29	Chance rain/snow 43/na

The Nugget Newspaper, Inc.

Website: www.nuggetnews.com
 442 E. Main Ave., P.O. Box 698, Sisters, Oregon 97759
 Tel: 541-549-9941 | Fax: 541-549-9940 | editor@nuggetnews.com



Postmaster: Send address changes to
The Nugget Newspaper,
 P.O. Box 698, Sisters, OR 97759.
 Third Class Postage Paid at Sisters, Oregon.

Publisher - Editor: Kiki Dolson
News Editor: Jim Cornelius
Production Manager: Leith Williver
Classifieds & Circulation: Teresa Mahnken
Advertising: Lisa Buckley
Graphic Design: Jess Draper
Proofreader: Pete Rathbun
Accounting: Erin Bordonaro

The Nugget is mailed to residents within the Sisters School District; subscriptions are available outside delivery area. Third-class postage: one year, \$40; six months (or less), \$25. First-class postage: one year, \$85; six months, \$55.

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Robert B. Reich

American Voices

Republicans, who now run Congress, say they want to cooperate with President Obama and point to the administration's Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, as the model. The only problem is that the TPP would be a disaster.

If you haven't heard much about the TPP, that's part of the problem right there. It would be the largest trade deal in history — involving countries stretching from Chile to Japan, representing 792 million people and accounting for 40 percent of the world economy — yet it's been devised in secret.

Lobbyists from America's biggest corporations and Wall Street's biggest banks have been involved but not the American public. That's a recipe for fatter profits and bigger paychecks at the top, but not a good deal for most of us.

We used to think about trade policy as a choice between "free trade" and "protectionism." Free trade meant opening our borders to products made elsewhere. Protectionism meant putting up tariffs and quotas to keep them out.

In the decades after World War II, America chose free trade. The idea was that each country would specialize in goods it produced best and at least cost. That way, living standards would rise here and abroad. New jobs would be created to take the place of jobs that were lost. And communism would be contained.

For three decades, free trade worked. It was a win-win-win.

But in more recent decades the choice has become far more complicated and the payoff from trade agreements more skewed to those at the top.

Tariffs are already low. Negotiations now involve such things as intellectual property, financial regulations, labor laws, and rules for health, safety and the environment.

It's no longer free trade versus protectionism. Big corporations and Wall Street want some of both.

They want more international protection when it comes to their intellectual property and other assets. So they've been seeking trade rules that secure and extend

their patents, trademarks and copyrights abroad.

But they want less protection of consumers, workers, small investors and the environment, because these interfere with their profits. So they've been seeking trade rules that allow them to override these protections.

Not surprisingly for a deal that's been drafted mostly by corporate and Wall Street lobbyists, the TPP provides exactly this mix.

What's been leaked about it so far reveals, for example, that the pharmaceutical industry gets stronger patent protections, delaying cheaper generic versions of drugs. That will be a good deal for Big Pharma but not necessarily for the inhabitants of developing nations who won't get certain life-saving drugs at a cost they can afford.

The TPP also gives global corporations an international tribunal of private attorneys, outside any nation's legal system, who can order compensation for any "unjust expropriation" of foreign assets. The tribunal can order compensation for any lost profits found to result from a nation's regulations.

Anyone believing the TPP is good for Americans, take note: The foreign subsidiaries of U.S.-based corporations could just as easily challenge any U.S. government regulation they claim unfairly diminishes their profits — say, a regulation protecting American consumers from unsafe products or unhealthy foods, investors from fraudulent securities or predatory lending, or the environment from toxic emissions.

The administration says the trade deal will boost U.S. exports in the fast-growing Pacific Basin, where the United States faces growing economic competition from China.

Fine. But the deal will also allow American corporations to outsource even more jobs abroad.

The TPP is a Trojan horse in a global race to the bottom, giving big corporations and Wall Street banks a way to eliminate any and all laws and regulations that get in the way of their profits.

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