

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

I would like to post a message regarding the ongoing discussion about the proposed paved trail from Sisters to Black Butte Ranch.

I live in the rural Deschutes County area; for me to ride my electric scooter in Sisters or any city is a real treat. I have ridden my scooter several times in the past on paved trails at other locations.

I am a disabled veteran; I'm always looking forward to an opportunity that would allow me some freedom to ride on paved trails as well as city streets.

Not saying I would ride on that particular trail, but makes me wonder how many persons that live with disabilities in those areas that would certainly love to ride their scooter, wheel chair or tricycle between Sisters and Black Butte [Ranch] on a paved trail! However, it would be a fun and interesting jaunt — just need to be sure to charge the batteries before. It's generally good for about 18 miles.

It's my understanding that the funds are available and the Forest Service has granted

ease, so what's the big fuss. Get 'er done!
Tom and Lorraine Barrier



To the Editor:

Residents in the Sisters community are generally concerned that carbon emissions from the burning of fossil fuels is leading to global warming. However, we need to be more than concerned.

Take a look at one gallon of gasoline, weighing 6.25 pounds and containing 84 percent pure carbon. As that gasoline burns, each carbon atom combines with two oxygen atoms, now creating 19.25 pounds of carbon dioxide, still from the same gallon of gasoline. An average automobile traveling 12,000 miles each year, averaging 25.5 miles per gallon, produces 4.5 tons of carbon dioxide per year. Various publications list the ability of a tree to absorb carbon dioxide at between 15 to 50 pounds per year. That is such a small amount.

See **LETTERS** on page 23



Robert B. Reich

American Voices

Can it be that America's small businesses are finally waking up to the fact that they're being victimized by big businesses?

For years, small-business groups such as the National Federation of Independent Businesses have lined up behind big-businesses lobbies.

They've contributed to the same Republican candidates and committees favored by big business. And they've eagerly connected the Republican Party in Washington to its local business base. Retailers, building contractors, franchisees, wholesalers and restaurant owners are the bedrock of local Republican politics.

But now small businesses are breaking ranks. They're telling congressional Republicans not to make the deal at the very top of big businesses' wish list: a cut in corporate tax rates.

"Given the option, this or nothing, nothing is better for our members," Liam Donovan, the director of legislative and political affairs at Associated Builders and Contractors, told Bloomberg Politics.

Small businesses won't benefit from such a tax deal because most are "S" corporations and partnerships, known as "pass-throughs" since business income flows through to them and appears on their owners' individual tax returns. So a corporate tax cut without a corresponding cut in individual tax rates would put small businesses at a competitive disadvantage.

The fight is significant, and not just because it represents a split in Republican business ranks. It marks a new willingness by small businesses to fight against growing competitive pressures from big corporations.

Big corporations have expanded their intellectual property, merged with or acquired other companies in the same industry, and gained control over networks and platforms that have become industry standards.

They've deployed fleets of lawyers to litigate against potential rivals that challenge their dominance, many of them small businesses.

And they've been using their growing economic power to get legislative deals making them even more dominant, such as the corporate tax cut they're now seeking.

All this has squeezed small businesses — undermining their sales and profits, eroding market shares and making it harder for them to enter new markets.

Contrary to the conventional view of an American economy bubbling with innovative small companies, the rate at which new businesses have formed has slowed dramatically.

Contributing to the drop was the deregulation of finance — which turned the biggest Wall Street banks into powerhouses that swamped financial markets previously served by regional and community banks.

Many small businesses can't get the financing they once got from state and local bankers. Over the past two decades, loans to small businesses have dropped from about half to less than 30 percent of total bank loans.

Meanwhile, small businesses are feeling the same financial pinch the rest of us endure from big corporations whose growing market power is letting them jack up prices for everything from pharmaceuticals to Internet connections.

So the willingness of small-business groups to take on big business on its top legislative priority could mark the start of a political realignment.

If small businesses were willing to ally themselves with consumer, labor and community groups, they could press for stronger anti-trust enforcement against giant corporations, as well as for breaking up Wall Street's biggest banks and strengthening community banks.

Such an alliance might even become a powerful voice for campaign-finance reform, containing the political clout of giant corporations.

Even if the political realignment doesn't happen soon, small businesses will eventually wake up — and could play a central role.

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Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Mostly sunny 75/41	Sunny 78/47	Chance showers 79/50	Mostly sunny 82/49	Partly sunny 81/46	Mostly cloudy 67/na

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