

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

Correction —

Last week I provided information that was not accurate. While much of Deschutes County has a code live/snow load of 25 pounds per square foot, this was not true for all areas of the county — including Sisters. Snow loads, in fact, are site-specific and based on location and elevation.

It is best to talk with your city or county building department for code information.

That said, code requirements change over time, and if it is possible to locate original construction documents, it is likely they will provide engineering information specific to your structure at the time it was built.

I apologize for the error — and to those who's wives directed them to shovel their roofs based on my submission.

Kris Calvin

Editor's note:

Kris is right — best to get information about your specific house. The county has been the contractor for building codes in Sisters for five years.

Randy Scheid, building official for Deschutes County, said that "all of the plan reviews that we have conducted for the City of Sisters have been to 35# ground snow, except for the very small portion of the western city limits that is at 45# ground snow. We have shown the vast majority of the city at 35# snow load for all of my career."

However, that does not mean that all roofs in Sisters are rated at that level.

♦ ♦ ♦

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Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Mostly Cloudy 35/20	Slt. Chance Snow 35/14	Mostly Sunny 33/13	Mostly Sunny 36/18	Mostly Sunny 39/21	Mostly Sunny 40/na

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Robert B. Reich

American Voices

The ongoing contest between the Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders wings of the Democratic Party continues to divide Democrats. It's urgent Democrats stop squabbling and recognize seven basic truths:

1. The party is on life support. Democrats are in the minority in both the House and Senate, with no end in sight. Since the start of the Obama administration, they've lost 1,034 state and federal seats. They hold only 16 governorships and face 32 state legislatures fully under GOP control. No one speaks for the party as a whole. The party's top leaders are aging, and the backbench is thin.

The future is bleak unless the party radically reforms itself. If Republicans do well in the 2018 midterms, they'll control Congress and the Supreme Court for years. If they continue to hold most statehouses, they could entrench themselves for a generation.

2. We are now in a populist era. The strongest and most powerful force in American politics is a rejection of the status quo, a repudiation of politics as usual, and a deep and profound distrust of elites, including the current power structure of America.

That force propelled Donald Trump into the White House. He represents the authoritarian side of populism. Bernie Sanders' primary campaign represented the progressive side.

The question hovering over America's future is which form of populism will ultimately prevail

3. The economy is not working for most Americans. The economic data show lower unemployment and higher wages than eight years ago, but the typical family is still poorer today than it was in 2000, adjusted for inflation; median weekly earnings are no higher than in 2000; a large number of working-age people — mostly men — have dropped out of the labor force altogether; and job insecurity is endemic.

4. The party's moneyed establishment — big donors, major lobbyists, retired members of Congress who have become bundlers and

lobbyists — are part of the problem. Even though many consider themselves "liberal" and don't recoil from an active government, their preferred remedies spare corporations and the wealthiest from making any sacrifices.

The moneyed interests in the party allowed the deregulation of Wall Street and then encouraged the bailout of the Street. They're barely concerned about the growth of tax havens and inside trading, increasing market power in major industries (pharmaceuticals, telecom, airlines, private health insurers, food processors, finance, even high tech), and widening inequality.

5. It's not enough for Democrats to be "against Trump," and defend the status quo. Democrats have to fight like hell against regressive policies Trump wants to put in place, but Democrats also need to fight for a bold vision of what the nation must achieve — like expanding Social Security, and financing the expansion by raising the cap on income subject to Social Security taxes; Medicare for all; and world-class free public education for all.

And Democrats must diligently seek to establish countervailing power — stronger trade unions, community banks, more incentives for employee ownership and small businesses, and electoral reforms that get big money out of politics and expand the right to vote.

6. The life of the party — its enthusiasm, passion, youth, principles and ideals — was elicited by Bernie Sanders' campaign. This is the future of the Democratic Party.

7. The party must change from being a giant fundraising machine to a movement. It needs to unite the poor, working class and middle class, black and white — who haven't had a raise in 30 years, and who feel angry, powerless and disenfranchised.

If the Democratic Party doesn't understand these seven truths and fails to do what's needed, a third party will emerge to fill the void.

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