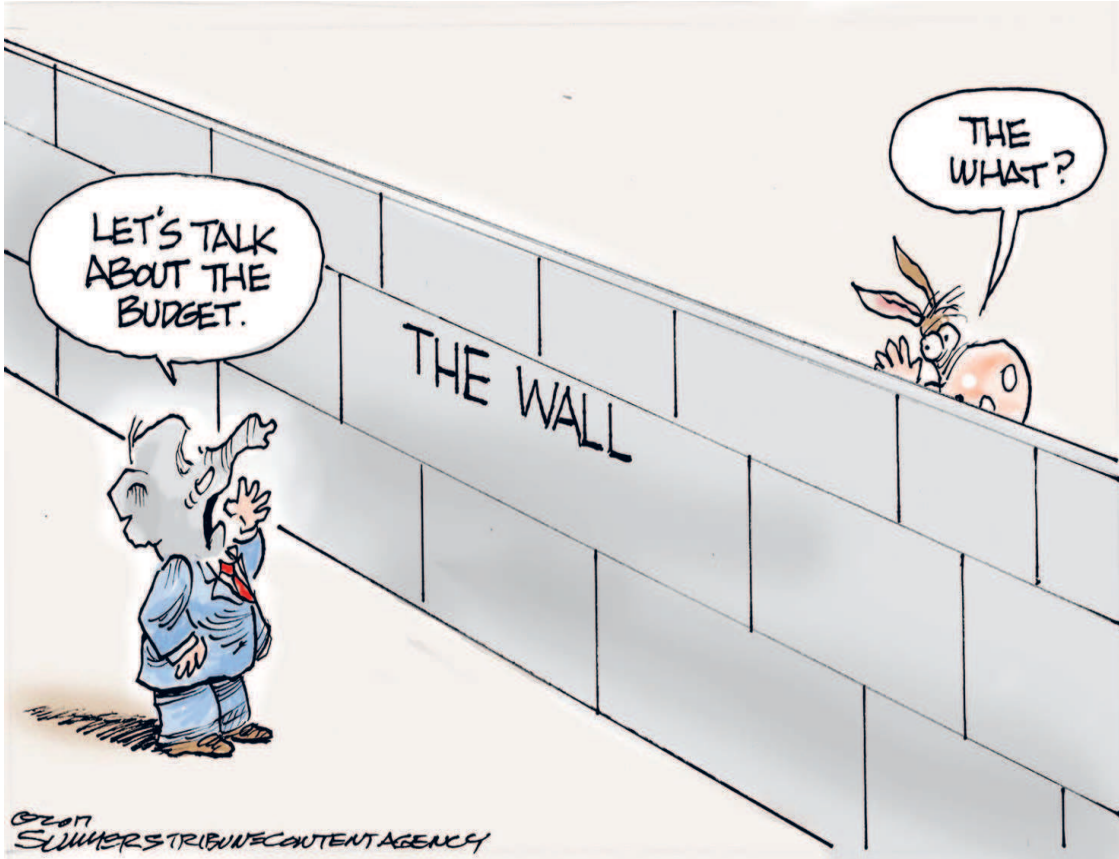


O P I N I O N



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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

We are nearing the 10th anniversary of the Great Recession. How are Trump and his billionaire cronies celebrating? By reversing or scaling back the regulations that were put into place to prevent the kinds of risky practices that caused the recession in the first place! Of course! Perfectly logical! The far right never met a regulation they didn't hate, regardless of common sense.

Do people think these actions were Obama/Democrat/partisan? These regulations were developed by the best economists in the world in direct response to the practices that triggered the recession, similar to the rules that were instituted after the Great Depression. Anyone who remembers sub-prime mortgages, credit default swaps, collateralized debt obligations,

too-big-to-fail, etc., ought to realize these regulations should be strengthened, not weakened. We should be evolving toward a more stable economy by learning from past mistakes.

Scaling back these regulations is not fiscally conservative — on the contrary, it's very risky. As long as the risk is aimed squarely at the middle and lower class, and away from the wealthy elite, I guess the supposedly conservative far right doesn't mind gambling, after all.

If some of Trump's support came from folks frustrated with the slow pace of economic recovery, how does that square with policies that risk another downturn? Slow recovery would seem like Nirvana compared to another recession.

Stuart Scofield

Sisters Eagle Airport — more than an airport

By Benny and Julie Benson
Owners, Sisters Eagle Airport

From the outset, it has been our goal that the Sisters Eagle Airport was more than just an airport. We see it as community venue and as an economic engine for both tourism and business aviation.

On April 20, 2017, the Oregon Department of Aviation board unanimously voted, for a second time, to add the Sisters Eagle Airport to the list within the State Aviation Plan of "Airports of Significance," also known as Appendix M, or Exhibit 2.

The determination was based on criteria set forth in ORS836.610 which includes: 1. Provides important links in air traffic; 2. Provides essential safety or emergency services; or 3. Provides economic benefit to the county where the airport is located. ODA staff reviewed data supplied by the Airport owner, public comments submitted during the process, held a public hearing, and determined that the Sisters Airport met all three criteria.

We're delighted to have once again been recognized by the Oregon Department of Aviation as an Airport of Significance. We are committed to the success of the Sisters Eagle Airport and are now looking forward to sitting down with ODOT to address their concerns pertaining to the ConnectOregon Grant.

In response to the recent notification given to Sisters Eagle Airport by ODOT, and the recent press surrounding this issue, we wanted to personally share a statement to provide the community with an update in our own words.

We have received notification of ODOT's demand for repayment, reviewed the issues, and have requested and been granted a meeting with ODOT on May 3, 2017. We take this matter very seriously on both a professional and personal level and are working to resolve with ODOT as quickly as possible.

Eleven years ago, our family moved to Sisters, looking for a better way of life. Our sensitivity for the environment and engineering expertise led to the founding of ENERGYneering Solutions Inc. (ESI). ESI is

an innovative engineering, construction, and operations firm specializing in renewable energy, biogas collection, pretreatment systems, biogas-to-energy facilities, and biomass thermal facilities.

The company has grown to become one of the largest private employers in Sisters. Located at the Sisters Eagle Airport, ESI has benefited from the unique combination of employee lifestyle, high-speed communications, and immediate access to air travel allowing us to run a world-class engineering firm in the heart of Central Oregon.

We have always been and remain deeply committed to building the community of Sisters. In 2009, we started negotiations to purchase and improve the Sisters Airport. At the time, the airport was in a state of disrepair. In 2011, the State Review categorized the runway at the airport as a "Failed Runway." From 2011 through 2013, through a Public Private Partnership (P3), we worked with ConnectOregon and a self-funded private match to replace and widen the public-use runway. Additionally, we added a fuel station for local and visiting pilots.

In 2013, to further improve the airport for the community, we applied for and were awarded a second ConnectOregon grant to improve the fly-in visitor parking, a taxiway, LED runway lighting, and automated weather observation system at the airport. The work under both grants was completed on schedule and within budget. Additionally, at our own expense, we completed the first phase of an approved master plan with rental hangars for local pilots.

With the recent letter delivered to us by ODOT, we can assure the community that we have worked very closely with ODOT throughout the grant application and project execution phases of this process. Throughout this process, we have sought to maintain transparency and open communication with all our community partners. While we were completely shocked by ODOT's request, we look forward to working in cooperation with ODOT to reach a mutually agreeable resolution to this matter.

Opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and are not necessarily shared by the Editor or The Nugget Newspaper.

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Rain 51/31	Chance Rain/Snow 49/28	Chance Showers 50/27	Mostly Sunny 56/36	Mostly Sunny 57/34	Mostly Sunny 57/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



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