

Standing downwind from windfall best bet

State legislators discovered Wednesday that Oregon's economy should fatten the treasury with \$1 billion in new tax revenues over the biennium.

If the forecast is true, then we'd certainly hope the legislators will share the wealth.

Fortunately, some legislators have noted this economic forecast just might add strength to efforts to repeal the state spending limit that now prohibits most of the new revenue from being spent.

Efforts to modify the spending cap stalled in the Senate last week. Gov. Neil Goldschmidt has pushed for removal of the cap to accommodate his budget, which calls for spending \$225 million above the cap. Legislative watchers expect Goldschmidt's attempts to take hold, particularly now that legislators have received word of the windfall.

So, the first hurdle lawmakers face is breaking the state spending limit. Obviously, nothing can be done with the revenue until the cap is cracked wide open.

Thus far, it is the Democrats who are working to break the limit, in order to free the funds for state programs. It has been suggested that the money could be used for property tax relief throughout the state. This isn't such a bad idea, considering the bulk of the windfall has been attributed to rising personal income tax.

But should the Legislature decide to divert the funds to property tax relief — in effect, to return it to the people from which it came — it should be distributed evenly throughout the state, and not just targeted to the more populous areas, which could conceivably happen.

The "liberals" in the Legislature, as they've been referred to by Rep. Bill Markham, a conservative Republican from Riddle, are under close scrutiny from the "conservatives." However, there is fear that the liberals would love nothing more than to spend the windfall.

Alternative plans from the Republicans include using the money to pay off a \$70 million obligation to the state veterans' home loan fund — which was incurred in the 1950s and '60s. Interest on the loans has grown at a rate of \$500,000 per month, and Goldschmidt has proposed paying about \$20 million toward the debt in his 1989-91 budget. House Republican Leader Larry Campbell of Eugene, says now would be the best time to get rid of this obligation while the money is available.

True, the windfall might best be used to take care of current shortfalls in the state's budget. But we're still talking about a lot of money — surely some of it could find its way back to the taxpayers.

We still contend this is the best plan. Even though Rep. Carl Hosticka, of Eugene, has said only about \$100 million of the revenue could be counted as firm, it would behoove the Legislature to give some money back to the taxpayers.

It's not often that such a windfall comes about. Now that it has, we all should make an effort to be standing downwind from it.

DeFazio fights to ban log exports to save state jobs

In other legislative news — this time on the national scene — Rep. Peter DeFazio of Oregon introduced legislation into Congress on Wednesday to combat the revenue loss associated with exportation of Oregon timber to Pacific Rim countries.

DeFazio has expressed a "take-no-prisoners" stance in his attempts to limit the export of logs from state-owned lands. We hope he's successful in his efforts.

DeFazio's legislation would give states the right to limit the export of logs from state-owned lands. Similar legislation is under study in the Oregon Legislature, but this bill can have no effect until Congress passes the federal bill.

Several states have statutes limiting the export of raw timber off state lands, but these were challenged as an infringement on the ability of the federal government to control commerce — a governmental right by the Constitution.

Although the foreign markets have become increasingly profitable for contractors, the issue of lost jobs in Oregon still remains to be examined.

Oregon's timber trade is undoubtedly a major source of revenue to the state; but if Oregonians are losing jobs, then the economy will only stand to suffer.



Letters

Zealot

I respect the right of James Duhaime to hold and voice his own opinion regarding the use of animals in research (ODE, Feb. 27) but as an animal rights advocate, I do not appreciate being categorized as an "overly vocal, under-informed zealot." Granted, the voice of animal rights advocates has received much publicity in recent months, but the press cannot ignore the voice of the fastest growing grassroots movement in the United States. This movement claims many educated, compassionate and conscientious people who believe it is possible to live on this planet in a peaceful, compassionate, non-exploitative manner.

True, there are not alternatives for animals in many types of experiments and unfortunately, until vivisection and people such as Mr. Duhaime believe that there is a moral question involved, the development of alternatives will be a slow process that may never come to fruition.

I do not believe that human benefit off the backs of animals is morally correct and I will not attend your demonstration, Mr. Duhaime. I will attend a demonstration March 3 in front of Johnson Hall protesting the madness of vivisection. After the protest, I will attend a lecture which will be given by three of the foremost animal rights activists in the nation at a conference on our campus, sponsored by the Law School. I encourage you to attend, Mr. Duhaime, so that you can dispel the image of the "overly vocal, under-informed zealots" you think us to be.

Brigitte Leach
Rhetoric and communication

Free will

I am sorry that I missed the stories concerning the fundability of the Oregon Commentator. After reading two letters to the editor, however, I would like to add another adjective to their given headings "unprofessional" and "hypo-critical"; uninformed.

I recently attended an IFC

meeting where the Student Bar Association sought funding. When one law school group, The Federalist Society, had within its goal statement the terms "conservative" and small "l" "libertarian," the chairwoman immediately responded by saying that the IFC could not fund a group with a political bias. She was referring to "libertarian." Though I don't agree with the views that members of The Federalist Society hold, I was appalled at how uninformed she was. Webster's defines "libertarian" as upholding the doctrine of free will.

We were also continuously pelted with the phrase "we speak for the students." Give me a break. I have been at this University since 1982 and have yet to see an election turnout of over 15 percent, if that much. That tells me that these six or so members are most likely being elected by special interest groups who are continually awarded funding. I wonder how many of the remaining 85 percent of the students even know what "IFC" stands for?

It seems to me that the time has come for the University to completely restructure the IFC and remove the power to control \$3 million out of the hands of uninformed, biased and special interest influenced individuals.

Dan Perlow
Law student

Medication

I urge all socially responsible citizens taking: 1) insulin or anti-diabetic agents; 2) beta

blockers, nitrates, and other cardiac anti-arrhythmic agents; 3) antibiotics; 4) cyclosporin and other anti-rejection drugs; 5) anti-coagulants; 6) anti-hypertensives; and 7) almost all other medications — to stop medicating yourself immediately. Why? Because all of the above mentioned medications depended upon animal research to discover the benefits and uses of them.

What? You say, "That was before; now that we have them, it's okay to use them." No, I'm sorry. Ignorance is not innocence. We are guilty, you and I (I'm an insulin-dependent diabetic), for perpetuating the use of animals for research. We are living proof that animals were (and are) tortured and slaughtered for the ghastly end of preserving the lives of some members of the only species known to adapt its environment to itself, not the other way around, the only species capable (at times) of rational thought.

Just because it happened in the past does not mean that we can capitalize upon that research now. That makes us no better than ... animals. No, it is immoral and unethical for us to continue using these medications. Please, on behalf of animals everywhere, I plead with you to stop; take your own lives, but not those of animals.

And if you believe that, you deserve the dark age of mysticism and anti-intellect that is to come, and, in its footsteps, totalitarianism, repression and thought control. What time are you going to be there, Mr. Duhaime? I'll be there also.

Christopher Ramko
Student

Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Comments must be factually accurate and refrain from personal attacks on the character of others.

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.

The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style.