

Is California folly Oregon's future?

Oregonians must begin to see the effects of Measure 5 before replacement revenues can be justified. At least, that is one of the excuses used by the Oregon Legislature to justify its ostrich impersonation in the face of Measure 5.

Fortunately, we need wait no longer. The great state of California is proudly serving as a role model for the soon to be not-so-great state of Oregon. Just as California has plowed the way for fashion, entertainment and lifestyles, so now it leads Oregon down the road to fiscal self-destruction.

California began its fiscal year on July 1 with empty coffers. Currently \$10 billion short on cash, the state has been paying workers with IOUs, which banks so far have agreed to honor, assuming that the crisis would soon be solved. It hasn't been, and the banks may soon stop honoring the IOUs.

How does this relate to Oregon? The primary causes of the California crunch are Propositions 13 and 98. Prop. 13, enacted in 1979, limits property tax collection by the state. Prop. 98 guarantees nearly 40 percent of the state's general fund to schools. Combined, the two propositions equate to Measure 5.

The primary difference is that California's economy has been large enough to delay the effects of Prop. 13. Oregon, with a drastically smaller economy, stands to experience similar problems not later than 1995, when Measure 5 takes full effect. Already, Oregon has announced 4,000 job cuts and the possible closure of prisons and other drastic service cutbacks.

Four California universities have announced that they will no longer accept new students, and plans are being made to cut as many as 8,000 university jobs throughout the state, while remaining staff's working hours may be reduced by 25 percent. Here at the University, 200 layoffs are possible within the next year, along with a 20 percent budget reduction, increased tuition and decreased enrollment.

Those who were duped into lining the pockets of business and increasing the public tax burden by voting for Measure 5 continue to spew forth their misguided rhetoric, claiming that Oregon must cut waste and learn to live within its means. Yet, they fail to identify exactly where the alleged waste exists (the occasional highway crew standing around all day is not a valid example), and what exactly should be done about it.

Oregonians, along with their slumbering legislature, need to pay close attention to the crystal ball that is California and recognize the errors of their ways before the "Welcome to Oregon" signs are replaced with "Out of Business."



LETTERS

What's special?

Is it a "special right" to visit a loved one in the hospital? It is a basic right my partner of 16 years and I are not entitled to because we are not entitled to recognition as a family unit by state law. In the event of an emergency that requires hospitalization, we are not granted the basic right to make critical decisions for one another or even be by one another's side in times when only "family" is permitted.

Is it a "special right" to fall in love, to develop a relationship of caring and financial interdependence, and have that relationship treated with respect and dealt with fairly by law? Not if that relationship is with a person of the same sex.

Is the right to jointly acquire property or the right to inheritance a "special right"? These rights are not "special rights," but are basic rights of citizenship the Oregon Citizens Alliance intends to be sure my partner and I never have.

I believe voicing my concerns about the lack of legal recognition for someone I regard as my spouse is minding my own business. It is not an attempt to impose my sexual orientation on anyone, nor is it an attempt to gain any "special rights." This is a difficult idea for some people to grasp, especially in a society where merely holding hands in public with someone I love is viewed by many as a threatening political expression of "militant homosexuality."

Ron Schlittler
Student

Validation

I am writing in response to Pat Smith's letter (ODE, July 7). I don't remember ever playing a "victim role," as Smith so eloquently put it. However, as a lesbian woman, I do feel that I have been victimized and harassed by many individuals who feel that it is their right to comment on who I should or should not sleep with, or how I can or cannot express myself.

Smith, whatever your point was about using (Hitler-like) models of action, I am really surprised at you. We all know what happens when you make generalizations about a sector of society based on the remarks of one individual. I would never dare say that every "G-D fearing christian" follows the word and letter of David Duke or every African American endorses Louis Farrakhan. As a Jewish woman, I am offended by the idea that anyone would try to sway opinions by using the Holocaust as a point of reference, or should I say research?

What I find interesting is that the "sexual orientation" that Smith so happily endorses is the same orientation that leads to one woman being battered every fifteen seconds, one woman being raped every minute and the multi-billion dollar a year porn industry. I think you really are not listening to your opponents. I don't want special rights. I want the rights you have. I want to enjoy the social and economic luxuries of a state-recognized union. I want to be recognized and validated.

And I want the OCA off my back.

Soshannah Oppenheim
Volunteer Coordinator,
Project Saferide

Laurel

We would like to take this opportunity to publicly applaud Leslie Warren and Tarra Withers on their publication of "Don't Get Left Behind: Booklet of Scheduled Multicultural Classes." All students should utilize this wonderful reference when coordinating their class schedules.

Multicultural curriculum has been slow in coming to this campus and can be difficult to find. As my fellow students have so eloquently stated, the booklet "is a shortcut to finding courses dealing with race and culture issues." Many of us have been searching for ways to expand our education in non-traditional ways to address some of the hidden rifts in our community.

We express here heart-felt gratitude for the work of Warren and Withers. So often laurels are not given to people who work hard to make this world a better place for all of us.

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