

Ferry Street Bridge expansion needed

For nearly five years, city officials have debated ways to combat traffic congestion on Ferry Street Bridge. It's time to stop talking and start building.

Voters will decide whether to support an expanded Ferry Street Bridge on Nov. 8. Measure 20-23 would authorize the city to expand the bridge to six lanes, with an additional two lanes reserved for pedestrians and bicyclists. About \$41 million in state, federal and county money has been earmarked for the \$73 million project.

Expanding the bridge is a logical way to utilize public money while making room for Eugene's growing population. In the past 10 years, Eugene's population has increased by more than 16,000. With companies such as Sony and Semantic locating in Eugene and Springfield, the population is expected to soar. More people means more cars that Eugene highways can not handle.

The Ferry Street Bridge can not accommodate current traffic levels or make room for any population growth. Alternative solutions to an expanded bridge — such as the Mill Street Bridge alternative which would leave the bridge as is but would add a connector for buses, pedestrians and bicyclists — ignore Eugene's increasing population.

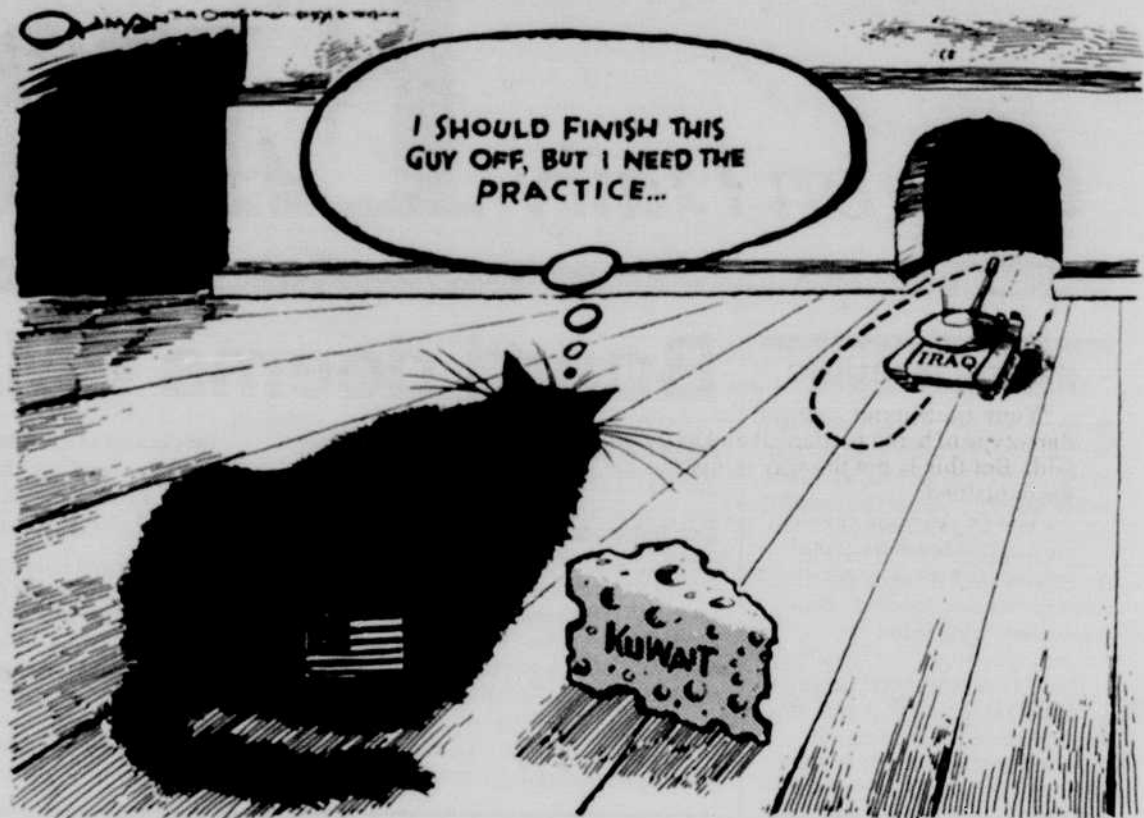
Opponents say their solutions would work if we could maintain traffic at its current level. That would mean telling anyone who moves here to ride their bikes to work, walk to school or ride the bus to the mall. Ideally, it would be a great way to halt urbanization. Realistically, it wouldn't work. People won't change their habits because a city doesn't want to grow.

An expanded bridge is critical for the city to meet police, fire and medical needs. Ambulances traveling over the bridge have difficulty reaching Sacred Heart General Hospital in an adequate response time. Traffic congestion is a terrible excuse for poor emergency services.

A larger Ferry Street Bridge could improve the vitality of downtown, which has lost several key businesses during the past 10 years. Businesses would be less likely to relocate if customers had better access to the downtown area, which the expanded Ferry Street Bridge would provide.

A city of 119,000 people can not continue to function with an inferior infrastructure. We need to recognize this opportunity to expand before it slips away. The federal government has devoted \$24 million for this project, while the state and Lane County are chipping in \$14 million and \$3 million, respectively. That money could disappear within the next year if voters don't pass this measure. It would be much more painful to fund this expansion, which is going to have to happen sooner or later, without earmarked funds.

Eugene can not afford to turn its back on growth. If we don't accommodate change, traffic congestion will just be the start of our problems. Vote yes on Measure 20-23.



LETTERS

Write me

I'm writing because I would like to meet new and interesting people and develop friendships. I want to learn new concepts and ideas from people. I want to be able to laugh and cry, to be of help and to grow with them.

I sit in a death row cell, totally deprived of contact with people and ways in which we can find each other. I have no family to speak of, and because of my situation, they have distanced themselves. They don't want to feel the pain of what they believe to be my inevitable demise.

Even though I have great hope, I will never give up on my family. But I do so need friendship and I am seeking it through you, whose hearts this letter may touch.

I am a Native American/Canadian French, 5 feet 11 inches tall with dark brown to almost black hair that is somewhat long.

I would like to hear from all those with a sincere heart.

Please write:

Sean B. RunningEagle #71847
Arizona State Prison-Florence
P.O. Box 8600
Florence, AZ 85232

I don't have much of an income, and I would really appreciate a little help with the postage stamps so that I will be able to respond to your letters.

Sean B. RunningEagle
Death Row Inmate

tic industry. The messages were put into plastic bottles to symbolize the plastics issue.

Many students rallied before the meeting at Portland State University. Joining the rally was Dick Springer, state senator. About 35 OSPIRG students attended the meeting, and some let the commissioners know how they felt. It goes to show that voices can be stronger than big money.

Brie Malarkey
Eugene

Paying the price

This letter is in response to Gayle Forman's column (ODE, Oct. 25) indicating that professors can "prevent students' buy-back woes." How I wish this were more true. I have had to select several textbooks, and it is a difficult procedure made more difficult by incomplete information and publishers' habits.

Much of the information given us by the publishers makes no mention of the cost. So, we may read a dozen reviews, then select two or three for further review. The sample copies come, again with no price. We select the text that seems best for the class.

What happens to the rejected texts? Too often they sit unused in our offices because the publisher has no easy return policy. The end result is that YOU pay for other people's unused texts!

When the selection is given to the Bookstore, again there is no price given. The whole procedure can happen with the professor having no idea how much the book costs.

I'm not trying to limit our responsibility for textbook choice. However, the best way to get people to make better decisions is to make it easier for them to do so. Pressure on the publishers to provide return postage and informing professor of the prices would help. Being able to use the Bookstore for information about changes in the new editions would help.

There are a lot more of you than there are of us. If you want change, help us help you by pushing and nudging businesses and institutions, not professors.

Barbara DeFilippo
GTF Psychology

Cyanide works

Larry Haftl's commentary on Ballot Measure 16 demonstrates a limited understanding of assisted suicide. The argument I hear most often from proponents is related to the "right" to die and the idea that this measure would ensure that basic right to everyone.

What this measure would do is grant immunity from Oregon homicide laws for a certain class of professionals. What most people don't realize is that doctors are not now, and have never been, trained to assist patients in ending their lives.

Currently, the only drugs available to physicians to prescribe in aiding suicidal patients are barbiturates and a substance called Sercolen. The body's reaction to these drugs does nothing to provide the patient with a peaceful exit, as they commonly cause profuse vomiting and convulsions and, occasionally, death.

Many who attempt to overdose on these drugs will vomit the poison and will, at best, experience abdominal cramping. At worst, they will be left in a vegetative state. Ballot Measure 16 doesn't even give us the option of ending life "gracefully and with dignity," as Larry Haftl writes.

Those who seek suicide are better able to do themselves in than a doctor is. Though suicide is an unfortunate occurrence, any person can obtain lethal gas from a welding supply shop, or a mask and tubing from a home medical supplier.

If people really want their death wish to be legitimized by a class of professionals, perhaps they should consider veterinarian-assisted suicide. At least veterinarians are trained to dispense with large mammals quickly and efficiently.

Until the government allows doctors to dispense cyanide tablets to the population (don't count on it), the peaceful death envisioned by many as the promise of this measure is simply misleading.

If you have any questions about this issue, please attend the public forum Thursday at 7 p.m. in Room 302 Gerlinger.

Kirsten Parmeter
Sociology

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