

Cover more drinks under 'bottle bill'

There has been much talk in Salem lately — talk about single mothers, talk about education, talk about crime and talk about bottles. Some of this talk has been positive, and some (mostly the talk done by Kevin Mannix) has been fairly negative.

The big topic of talk last week in Salem was bottles. Should the bottle bill be expanded to cover more types of bottles and where should they be taken for recycling?

Rep. Floyd Prozanski would like to see the legal definition of beverage expanded to include any ready-to-drink liquid, except milk and milk substitutes. A lobbyist for Safeway Inc. would like to see the responsibility for collecting recyclable containers fall to a central collection center as opposed to the stores, where it currently lies.

We think Prozanski has a pretty good point. There are so many beverage choices now, including Snapple, Lipton Iced Tea and Ocean Spray juice drinks. The list is endless. Wouldn't it be great to get a few cents back on those bottles, too? In addition, Prozanski would like to see the 5 cent deposit double. We think both of these ideas are very good.

Studies have shown that Oregon's recycling program for bottles works. In Oregon, 93 percent of bottles get returned to the store.

We are not quite as enthusiastic about moving the collection of bottles from grocery stores to recycling centers. We understand what a hassle it is for people who have to count the bottles. We also are sympathetic to the safety concerns that grocery stores and their employees have about handling dirty bottles. All of these concerns are legitimate and need to be addressed.

But changing the location of bottle collection from the stores to central collection centers could drastically halt the success of Oregon's bottle recycling efforts. One of the reasons so many people recycle their bottles is because it is easy and convenient. Recyclers don't have to go out of their way to do their environmental duty.

If Oregon were to build huge central recycling centers, would the public continue to recycle its bottles and cans? We don't think so.

More importantly, where will the money to build these new facilities come from? The state is already strapped for cash and will have trouble fulfilling the financial obligations imposed on it in the Nov. 8 election.

We would applaud and enthusiastically support a bill that expanded the legal definition of beverage and would allow consumers to recycle more containers for deposit. But we oppose a bill that would move the recycling of bottles and cans from grocery stores because we think it would reverse years of success in recycling.

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■ OPINION

Welfare reform will hurt women



ANNE MOSER-KORNFELD

The recent proposals to reform the welfare system are a further attack against women.

Women are the main recipients of welfare benefits. Poverty, then, can be regarded as beneficial to women. Less benefits and more poverty will make women strong, no doubt. Women will be able to enhance their job training and skills because desperation makes people, especially female welfare cheats, work.

Women have been making strides to get ahead and to change the structure of society. Welfare cuts are another slap in women's faces. Get back in your place, honey. Don't think for a minute about getting ahead, not in this century. No way, no how.

Money is freedom. Women who accept government assistance do not want to be in a dependent situation. The government's income restrictions penalize welfare recipients. Individuals who want to earn an income that puts them above the poverty line lose their chance at getting up and out of the welfare trap.

Women venture to move out of dependent relationships with men and economically struggle to provide for themselves. To do this, women must first achieve economic independence. From there women are able to achieve liberation.

But women continue to earn far less than their male counterparts, even when a woman's qualifications are equal to or surpass those of a man.

Money is a double-edged sword for women. Women aren't supposed to want the same things as men. When women do, their reputations are called into question. Women's basic needs are viewed as greed.

Welfare comes naturally to women. Women are used to

being taken care of and taught not to question injustice. Women are conditioned into not striving for much.

Women traditionally set their sights far below those that men consider for themselves. Women don't think, "I will, I am and I do." Women tend to think, "I might, I could and if only..."

We live in a sick, addictive society that doesn't value equally its human resources.

Children and education don't matter. Parents send their children through public school systems that are not much more than overpopulated baby-sitting services. Later, society wonders how things could have gotten so bad and what happened to family values.

The fashionable family values of the late '50s and early '60s that right-wingers want society to return to meant nothing then and mean even less today.

One shared, perhaps even "family" value, is the common perception not to care. Kids are tough and can take care of themselves. Push off the responsibility onto someone else.

The legacy left behind by the *Father Knows Best* mindset is to forget that what happens this year greatly affects what will happen in twenty years or into the next millennium.

When we deplete the welfare system and relegate children to orphanages and substandard schools, we've shown how little stock we'll put into the future.

Income has gotten stratified to the point where the division between those who have and those who have not uses up our human resources. People are hustling around to break even and are unable to use their energy toward collective good.

With the human population growing every year and far exceeding what the planet can

sustain, it is no wonder that folk like Gingrich take a survival-of-the-fittest attitude. Losing sense of our collective altruism means nothing to politicians who have more than enough to get by and don't question their ulterior motives.

Go back to the word, welfare. Welfare means well-being and health. It has come to mean government programs.

Welfare is what primary caretakers, moms and dads, do. They take care of the well-being of children. Families do that, however non-conventional families are. As long as children have a good self-esteem, respect for others and are loved, they're in the right family. Sex of parents doesn't matter, religion doesn't matter and race doesn't matter. What matters is that children are secure and assured of their well-being — their welfare.

But Gingrich's plan is much more than semantics. His plan doesn't attempt to hold defense contracts to the same standards he wants to apply to welfare.

Welfare restructuring is an attempt to shake people off the social ladder who don't vote and who don't take part in how we mobilize our society.

Balancing the budget by eliminating social programs may look good in the short term, but once the Republicans get out of office and inner-cities fall into further ruin, there are still the long term effects.

Rich grinch Gingrich. Gingrich's plan is thoughtless. His plan and the criticism that social problems evolved out of developing large-scale social programs are wrong-headed evaluations.

One thing is for sure, women and welfare get the sucker punch.

Anne Moser-Kornfeld is a columnist for the *Emerald*.

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■ CORRECTION

A column in Thursday's *Oregon Daily Emerald* incorrectly stated that OSPIRG's budget is smaller than the *Emerald's*. However, the *Emerald* was actually allotted \$129,000 last year, behind OSPIRG.