

OUR VIEW

Trade deal good for farmers

Farm groups are lauding a new agricultural trade deal the administration has reached with Japan.

During the 2016 election President Donald Trump campaigned against trade deals that he said put U.S. producers at a disadvantage. Once elected he made good on his promise to pull out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which was the pact regulating trade among 12 Pacific Rim nations.

Trump said he would replace TPP with bilateral trade deals.

The new deal is good news for U.S. farmers and ranchers. Japan represents a \$14 billion market for U.S. farm products. Without this deal, American agriculture would face significantly higher tariffs than competitors that are a part of the 11-party successor agreement to TPP.

According to the deal, Japan will reduce tariffs on products valued at \$2.9 billion in stages. Among the products benefiting from this enhanced access will be fresh and frozen beef and pork.

Tariffs will be eliminated immediately on more than \$1.3 billion of U.S. farm products including, for example, almonds, blueberries, cranberries, walnuts, sweet corn, grain sorghum, food supplements, broccoli and prunes.

Other products valued at \$3.0 billion will benefit from staged tariff elimination. This group of products includes, for example, wine, cheese and whey, ethanol, frozen poultry, processed pork, fresh cherries, beef offal, frozen potatoes, oranges, egg products and tomato paste.

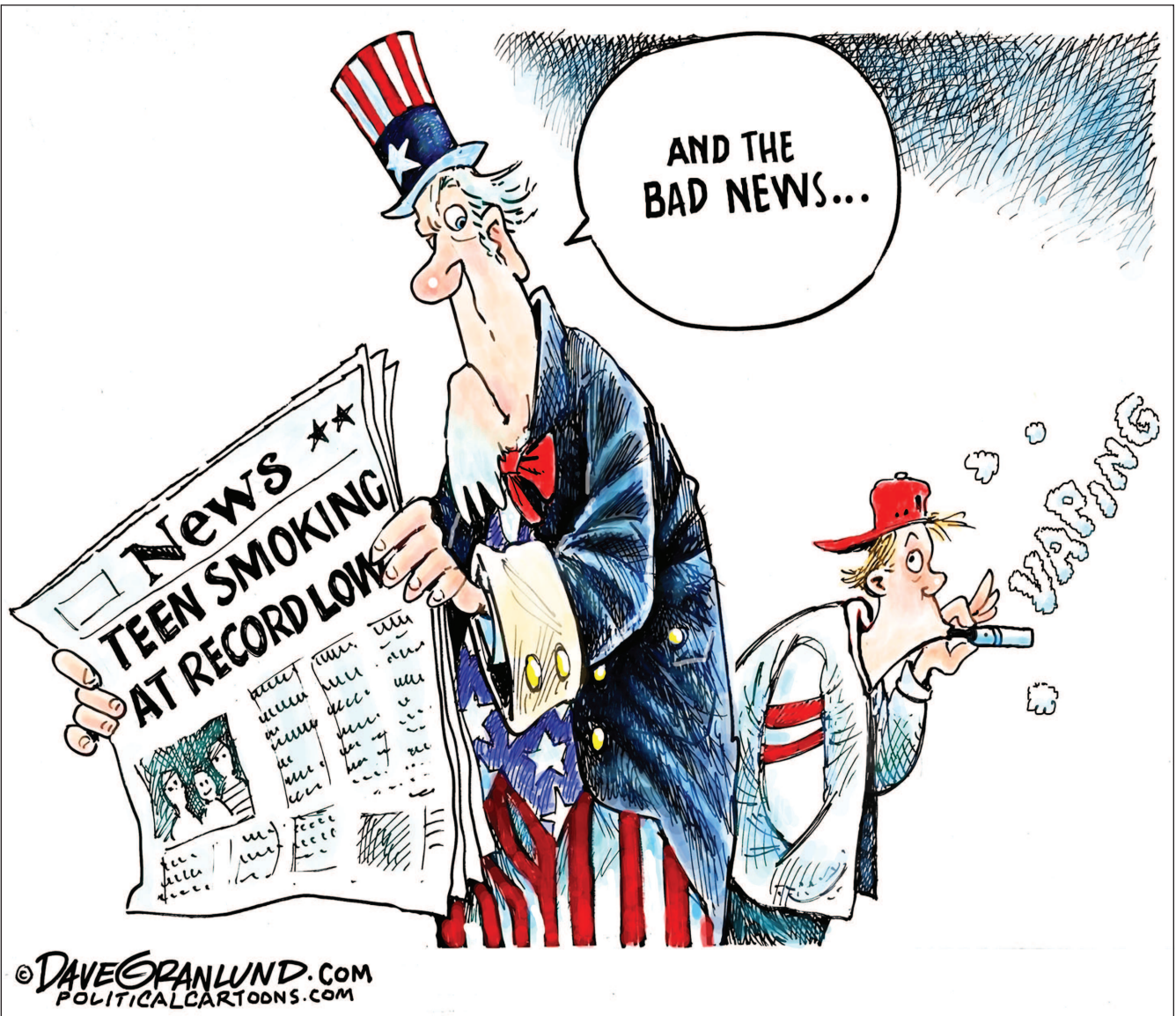
This deal with Japan underscores two obvious points that make bilateral agreements possible. Our trading partners want our goods. The Japanese, for example, have sought out wheat produced in the Pacific Northwest. More important, our partners are anxious to get their goods into the United States, the largest economy in the world.

While we don't pretend to understand the Trump negotiating strategy, and aren't sure there is a strategy, new trade deals are being hammered out.

The administration says its deal with Japan doesn't substantially change U.S. law, so it doesn't require congressional approval.

That's good news, if it's true. Congress hasn't done anything to ratify the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, the replacement for the North American Free Trade Agreement announced a year ago.

While it's clear other countries want our business, it's not clear Congress is interested in giving it to them.



MY VOICE

Government can promote equal justice, but not equal outcomes

First of all, I would like to thank Mary McCracken, in her rebuttal letter from September, for not reducing herself to the ad hominem attacks typically employed by progressives when they find someone who disagrees with them. She makes some interesting points that I feel represent a misunderstanding of my On the Fence article of late August, “What does a fair and just society look like?”

When I echoed Jefferson’s statement in the Declaration that “all men are created equal,” I was emphasizing that the intent of the Constitution and following amendments were ultimately intended to give equal protection under the law. It is wicked for a society to allow arbitrary or unequal justice based on skin shade, wealth, personal power or influence or the lack thereof. But it is equally wicked for a society to create so called “equity” in every field by discriminating against those who are truly qualified, regardless of gender or skin shade, and promoting those who are less qualified, based on the same criteria. When colleges, medical schools, trade schools, business schools, etc., use gender or racial preferences to favor certain subgroups of Americans, they create the very condition they are trying to mitigate against. They are not creating “fairness” — they are creating tribalism and hatred among subgroups of Americans, who intuitively know that promotion should be based on merit, not appearance or gender.

When Mary stated that I believed we were all born with equal opportunity, she misquoted me. I stated that we were an “equal opportunity nation,” not “an equality of outcomes nation.” To quote Milton Friedman again, “Equality of opportunity simply describes equality before the law and is ‘an essential

About the author



Chris Woodworth is a general surgeon at Grande Ronde Hospital. My Voice columns should be 500 words.

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component of liberty.” Obviously, we are not all born with equal opportunity. Some are born smarter than others, more athletically gifted, more musically inclined, more likely to understand how to build things, more likely to understand technology, etc. A fair and just society cannot and should not try to erase these distinctions between individuals.

Some are born into single-mother homes and are raised without fathers, which studies show is a distinct disadvantage to young men in particular, but this disadvantage cannot be erased by forcing the rest of Americans to pay for the mistakes of others. A fair and just society would then uphold the original institution of marriage as between one man and one woman for life.

Mary mentions the fact that unplanned pregnancies are not advantageous, but progressives typically exalt

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Phone:

541-963-3161

Toll free (Oregon):

1-800-422-3110

Fax: 541-963-7804

Email:

news@lagrandeobserver.com

Website:

www.lagrandeobserver.com

Street address:

1406 Fifth St., La Grande

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