

Bentz opposes Trump impeachment

By LES ZAITZ
Malheur Enterprise via AP StoryShare

ONTARIO — U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz, the only Republican in Oregon’s Congressional delegation, said Saturday, Jan. 9, he doesn’t think President Donald Trump should resign or be impeached. He said he expects the president to be held accountable “in the proper way.”

Bentz, just finishing his first week in Congress representing the 2nd Congressional District, said in an interview Jan. 9 with the Malheur Enterprise that impeaching Trump wouldn’t be a “productive exercise.”

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has said the House would move ahead to impeach Trump if he didn’t resign. A draft of Articles of Impeachment said Trump should be impeached for inciting an insurrection at the nation’s Capitol on Jan. 6.

Oregon’s U.S. senators, Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, have both called



Contributed Photo

U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario, at his new U.S. Capitol office with his wife, Lindsay Norman. Bentz was sworn in for the 117th U.S. Congress on Sunday, Jan. 3, 2021. He replaces retiring Rep. Greg Walden, R-Hood River, in representing Oregon’s 2nd Congressional District.

for Trump’s removal from office, as have U.S. Reps. Earl Blumenauer, Suzanne Bonamici, Peter DeFazio, all Democrats. U.S. Rep. Kurt Schrader, also a Democrat, announced Jan. 9 he would support impeachment. A day earlier, he publicly apologized for comparing impeachment to a lynching during a congressional call.

That leaves Bentz alone in the delegation in supporting the president’s continued service in office until the change of administrations on Jan. 20.

Bentz said he didn’t support the call for a resignation because “he’s going to be gone.”

He opposes impeachment. “I don’t think that’s the

proper thing to do,” said Bentz, an attorney from Ontario. “The proper thing to do is to have him leave office under the normal course.”

Bentz said, however, he expects Trump is “going to be held accountable in the proper way” for his role in the Jan. 6 insurrection.

He said he has asked for research on what may be the options “under the law” to hold Trump accountable.

Bentz was among 138 Republicans who voted Jan. 7 to object to Pennsylvania’s election results. The vote came just hours after the invasion of the Capitol was quelled. Bentz didn’t support the objection raised to Arizona’s results.

Bentz represents a heavily Republican district that covers Eastern Oregon and large portions of Southern Oregon. He resigned his seat in the state Senate to run for Congress, winning a seat vacated by the retirement of Republican Greg Walden of Hood River.

Oregon zoo mourns loss of orangutan Inji



Michael Durham/Oregon Zoo

PORTLAND — The Oregon Zoo on Friday, Jan. 9, 2021, said goodbye to its oldest resident, Sumatran orangutan Inji, who died at the age of 61. According to a press release from the zoo, Inji was likely the oldest orangutan in the world. She arrived at the zoo in 1961. Bob Lee, who oversees the zoo’s animal areas, said in the press release “Inji’s ability to connect with people was incredible. She inspired generations.”

National Guard to support COVID-19 shot clinics

By ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

SALEM — Hundreds of people received COVID-19 vaccines Friday, Jan. 8, at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in a mass vaccination the doctor in charge called “the most meaningful work of my career.”

This week, the operation will be stepped up with the Oregon National Guard having been called up by Gov. Kate Brown to support the mission in Salem.

“The goal is to vaccinate 250 people per hour, vaccinating thousands of Oregonians,” Brown announced during a Zoom call with reporters.

On Friday, Dr. Ralph Yates, chief medical officer for Salem Health Hospital and regional care system, looked with satisfaction as people received their shots at 24 tables set up in the cavernous, cinder-block main fairgrounds building.

“In terms of mass vaccinations (in Oregon) I think we’re it,” Yates said. “This can be replicated easily.”

There is space in the building, almost the size of a Costco, to triple the vaccination stations when National Guard medics and other troops arrive as early as Tuesday.

Those eligible to receive the vaccination are in the top priority category set by the Oregon Health Authority, which includes hospitals, health care providers and residents at long-term care facilities; emergency medical service providers and other first responders.

The line of people waiting for their shots from Salem health staffers snaked into the parking lot. Oregon Health Authority Director Patrick Allen told reporters in a Zoom news conference with Brown that people would merely need to attest they’re eligible for the shot. Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are being used.

But Yates said the system had to be tightened after several people were found in line who did not qualify. Now, people are being asked what their jobs specifically are.

“We want the community vaccinated, but there isn’t enough vaccine at this point,” Yates said.

The vaccinations at the fairgrounds started Wednesday with 200 vaccinations, getting into high gear at about 1,700 doses Thursday, and around the same number was expected on Friday, according to Yates.

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