

OUR VIEW

Will new climate policy create bad incentives?

The story is that, in colonial India, the British governor wanted to get rid of the cobras in Delhi. He set a bounty. It was high enough that people started farming cobras to make money.

It's what people call the cobra effect or perverse incentives. The best plans motivated by the best of intentions can go awry.

One of the best plans with the best of intentions in Oregon is arguably from Gov. Kate Brown.

If Oregon gets it right, the new climate friendly housing and transportation policies for the state ordered by Brown will lead to a much changed state.

More dense housing. More mixed-use development. Taller buildings. More use of bikes, walking and transit. Less parking.

More focus on looking at policies through an equity lens.

State committees are writing the rules and regulations to require those kinds of changes right now.

That may not be the kind of place you dream of living in. But the motivation is to transform the state into something that reduces the impact on climate change, is more equitable and is just a smarter way for people to live and get to and from where they need to go.

A challenge the proposed changes face is creating perverse incentives.

For instance, by compelling larger communities in Oregon, such as the greater Bend area, to adhere to the new policies, will it drive people, businesses and development into areas that don't face the most demanding requirements?

Think about an example. Larger areas like Bend will, under the proposed rules, be required to focus development in what are called climate friendly areas. That is where 30% of needed housing will need to be built. In Bend, maybe that would be in the city's core.

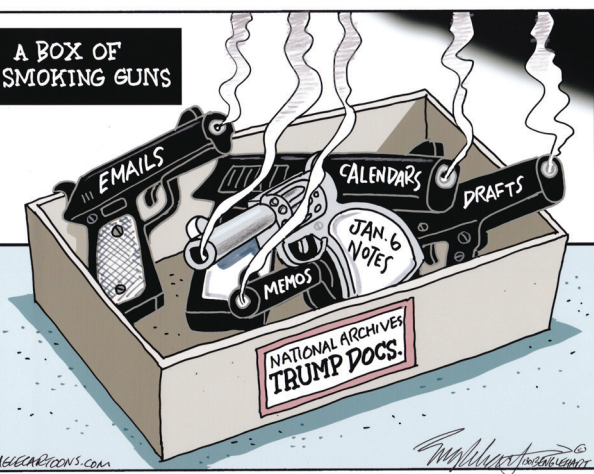
Requirements for housing might become more dense than they are now. Rules would discourage the use of the car and encourage the use of bikes, walking and transit.

If Bend wanted to expand its urban growth boundary under the proposed rules, it would need to identify a new climate friendly area within the city's current limits to meet half of the housing needed. The other half would be allowed in the expansion.

Will people want to live in more concentrated development? Some will. Others may look to move where the limits don't apply.

Developers may find it easier to build where the requirements may be less stringent. Businesses may want to locate there, too. Smaller communities in Oregon below 10,000 in population or 5,000 in population where the rules will be more flexible may see an influx of growth. That wouldn't exactly be what Brown intended.

Maybe it will never happen like that. But how will policymakers design the rules to avoid it?



We must let all Oregonians vote



ANTHONY BROADMAN
OTHER VIEWS

Imagine living in a society where only those with certain birthrights make decisions for the rest of us. Your taxes, criminal justice policy, land use actions, decisions about your children's education — you would have no formal power over such decisions.

Seems wrong, right? But that's the very system we are allowing to perpetuate under Oregon's citizen-only voting structure. All Oregonians should work together toward Oregonian suffrage — a system in which adults who live in Oregon can vote in Oregon elections, including voters who are not U.S. citizens.

The Oregon Constitution arguably bars non-U.S. citizens from voting. This disenfranchises many of us. And it wasn't always this way. In fact, it's inconsistent with some of the most positive aspects of our often-troubling heritage as a state. In 1848, Congress passed an organic act for the Oregon Territory that allowed noncitizens to vote. It wasn't until the early 20th century, on a wave of anti-immigrant sentiment, that Oregon undid noncitizen suffrage and sought to limit voting

rights to only U.S. citizens. In other words, we can change. And we should. All it takes is a constitutional amendment. We should change our state constitution because it's right for our democracy and right for our community. Disenfranchising people based on citizenship is wrong under any theory of tax fairness, representative democracy or equality.

We're behind. Communities across the country have committed to extending the franchise beyond U.S. citizens. Cities in Maryland, Vermont, California and New York have changed their city charters to allow noncitizen residents to vote in local elections.

Despite disputes over these initiatives elsewhere, universal suffrage in Oregon shouldn't be partisan. While Hispanic voters have tended to support the Democratic Party historically, in the last presidential election, areas with high populations of Hispanic and Asian-American voters turned out in higher numbers and shifted to the right. A recent Wall Street Journal poll shows Hispanic voters evenly split between the parties. Reducing the question to prejudiced hypotheses about how people of a particular ethnicity might vote cheapens our republican form of government. Guaranteeing the right to vote isn't a Democratic or Repub-

lican value, but an American one. We need to truly welcome people who choose to move to Oregon, enfranchise them and ensure they possess the same power to make decisions about our community and our future as every other voter.

It shouldn't matter where they were born or their citizenship status. It shouldn't matter whether you moved here from California or France. Representative democracy is part of ensuring our community evolves and remains an exceptional place to live.

Part of encouraging immigrants to live in Oregon means ensuring that when they get here they're part of the democratic process. If our republic is truly the land of the free and we are serious about upholding equal justice as a foundational value of our government, let's show it.

Hold our representatives to the promises they make about the public being involved in governmental decisions. Demand that when they say Oregon should be welcoming and equitable for all, they mean that for everyone, including all the people paying taxes, starting businesses and working for the future of our state and cities.

Anthony Broadman is a Bend city councilor. The opinions expressed here are his own.

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