

OUR VIEW

Compromise, statesmanship is best path to a unified Oregon

The Greater Idaho movement has secured a lot of momentum in many different rural areas of our state and it should be no surprise.

That's because many residents of Eastern Oregon are fed up with what they perceive to be a lack of accountability of their state government and a disconnect between what are almost two different cultures.

Clearly there is a political and cultural chasm between many portions of Eastern Oregon and pieces of the western side of the state.

All too often concepts that seem logical and useful in the Portland-metro area simply do not apply to the eastern part of the state.

The aim of the Greater Idaho movement is to use the Cascade Mountains as a sort of a dividing line. Land west of the mountains remains in Oregon, as would Bend and Sisters. Much of the rest of the state would become part of Idaho, seen by many as an entity that better fits the cultural and political outlook of the majority of Eastern Oregon's residents.

Earlier this year, Mike McCarter, the president of Citizen for Greater Idaho, the group pushing to move Idaho's border, said he wants Oregon legislators to sponsor a resolution next spring that would kickstart talks with Idaho about the concept.

Lynn Findley, R-Vale, told his constituents last year he would introduce such a resolution if county commissioners asked. Findley, though, said he didn't personally support the idea of moving the state's borders.

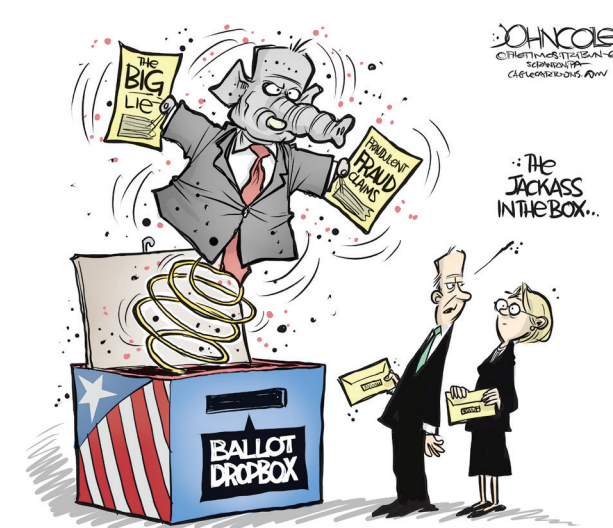
There are a lot of moving parts to this concept, a lot to unpack. While the idea has some merit, it really is very much like bringing a sledgehammer to a job that requires a tiny pickax.

In short, it proposes to tap into widespread discontent to deliver an answer that clearly overreaches.

The people that support the political effort of the Greater Idaho movement deserve a lot of credit. Their dedication can't be questioned. Yet, potential problems to enacting such a plan — and there is an array of challenges to it — make the idea nearly impracticable.

The real answer rests in the political arena, with our elected legislative leaders. There is a disconnect between specific portions of Oregon. They are deep, and they rest within a political pool of disgruntlement.

Our elected legislative leaders need to start working on bridging the political and cultural gap, finding ways to be successful even though they are in a minority party. That involves compromise and statesmanship. Not adhering to dogma.



YOUR VIEWS

Second District needs a veteran to represent us

This letter is directed to every veteran in Oregon's 2nd Congressional District because our wonderful representative, Cliff Bentz, voted against allowing 56,000 veterans who are victims of the burn pits in the Middle East from having access to Veteran's Affairs Health Care, citing it would cost too much.

What Rep. Bentz fails to realize is that taking care of the men and women who fought for freedom in a far-off land is part of the cost of war. To not vote for that bill shows me that Bentz hasn't been in the military nor has he talked to any of you who are suffering from the after-effects of those burn pits.

I think it's high time that Oregon's 2nd Congressional District got a veteran to represent us who knows what it means to protect the men and women who served.

Dr. Joseph Yetter is a military veteran and a medical doctor who will represent all of the district, not just those who gave him big campaign contributions. Oregon's 2nd Congressional District is better with Yetter. So in November remember vote Joe Yetter for Congress and send a fighter to Washington.

Barbara Ann Wright Pendleton

The climate crisis is actually a crime

As someone who follows local and national news reports, I must tell you I am worried about the recent extreme heat and wildfires raging across the country. I feel for people who lose their lives and livelihoods to extreme weather, and I'm scared that it's only a matter of time until it directly hits me and my community.

Seeing headlines in local news outlets covering these climate disasters made me realize that most news stories show no connection between them and their main cause: fossil fuels. This is dangerous, because many people will continue to refuse to see that longer, hotter and deadlier summers are caused and perpetuated by the disastrous coal, oil and gas projects — and the fossil fuel industry.

The science is clear — the longer we allow coal, oil and gas companies to dig and burn, the worse the impacts of the climate crisis will be. With every fraction of a degree of warming, we'll see and suffer more extreme heat, droughts, floods, wildfires and hurricanes. But the fossil fuel industry continues to ignore these alerts and undermine our chances

for a safer future, and CO2 emissions keep rising. We all know this is causing global heating and resulting in extreme weather events, yet they keep digging, burning and profiting, with zero accountability.

Climate impacts — like the recent heat waves and wildfires — disproportionately affect people and communities who are already marginalized and disadvantaged. People who did the least to cause the climate crisis suffer the worst from its impacts — they lose livelihoods, hope and worse: their lives — while oil companies continue to hit record profits. This is wrong on so many levels.

Local, regional and national media have an important role to play — and a moral obligation to tell the whole truth. It's time to make one thing about extreme weather very clear: It's not a "crisis" that just happens to us — it's a crime, and the fossil fuel industry is to blame. And saying it once isn't enough. Media has an important job to do to turn the tide of public opinion and help the world avoid the worst of the climate impacts.

Please tell the real story about the climate crisis.

Louise Squire La Grande

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