

OUR VIEW

Sending issue to voters the right call

The Union County Board of Commissioners made the right — and at this point only sensible — decision last week when they voted 3-0 to green-light an ordinance to ban the sale and manufacturing of psilocybin products in unincorporated portions of the county.

Now, the ordinance will go before voters in the Nov. 8 election. Voters should be the ones who make the final call on this issue. Yet there is a lot to unpack with the psilocybin issues, more than meets the eye. For one, it again clearly illustrates the wholly different cultures that live within the state.

Oregon voters approved Measure 109 to allow for the sale and manufacturing of psilocybin in 2020. The law will go into effect on Jan. 2, 2023. The measure secured 56% of voter approval but it stalled in many rural counties, including Union County.

Psilocybin is the ingredient in hallucinogenic mushrooms. Some research indicates it can be useful in treating a host of conditions, including post-traumatic stress disorder.

There is also some evidence that psilocybin helps people with depression and other addictions. Some argue — persuasively — that the absence of psilocybin to help treat veterans with post traumatic stress disorder is unfair.

All of those above points are excellent ones, but the truth is Union County and Eastern Oregon aren't ready for the sale and manufacture of psilocybin.

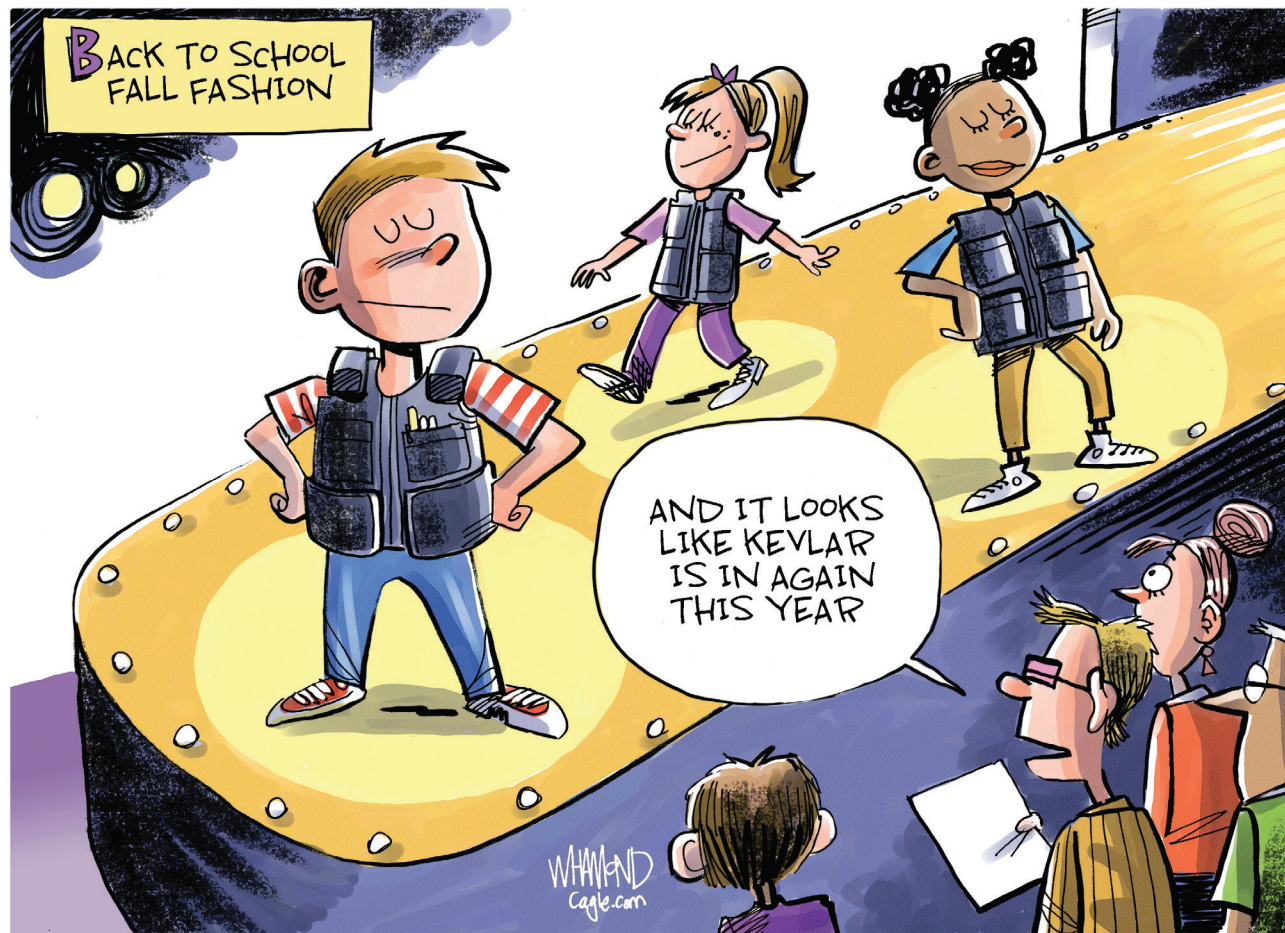
The majority of voters in Union County already stated where they stand on the issue.

Another problem is the state has not yet crafted detailed rules for regulating the manufacture and sale of psilocybin. While there is every reason to believe the state will create appropriate rules and regulations, right now elected leaders don't have much to go on. The only thing local leaders know for sure is the majority of Union County voters are not buying the psilocybin narrative.

The entire issue also outlines clearly the gap between certain portions of Oregon regarding issues such as psilocybin. Rural areas of the state, such as Eastern Oregon, do not view the world through the same lens as say, someone who lives in downtown Portland or Lake Oswego.

That's neither good nor bad, but just the way it is.

The commissioners did the right thing and allowing voters to make a decision on the proposed ordinance is the best way forward.



YOUR VIEWS

Only Idaho Power stockholders will benefit from B2H line

After moving to Baker City in 2008 from La Grande I have walked, hiked and run the trails at the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, often several times a week. It's difficult to describe the peacefulness and beauty that comes with every season there.

When friends or family members come to Baker City I am proud to take them to this amazing heritage site that sits outside Baker City with phenomenal views of the valley and our Elkhorn Mountains. This amazing vista would be destroyed due to the monstrously huge towers that would obstruct the view and destroy some of the historic wagon ruts. The B2H line would destroy the sweeping vistas of the carefully sited Oregon Trail Interpretive Center which was built at a cost of millions of taxpayer dollars.

I'm even more concerned about B2H because in order to construct new high voltage power lines across eastern Oregon, Idaho Power would be allowed to seize the property of private landowners — in some cases taking land that has been respected and cared for by the same families

for generations.

I also oppose B2H because of the impacts such a transmission line will have on the heightened possibility for wildfire in remote areas where rural communities and landowners are ill-equipped to fight a major fire, but bear the full risk of loss caused by any fires that do occur.

We in Oregon will not benefit from the B2H line, but Idaho Power stockholders will. For more information on the work that's being done to stop the Boardman to Hemingway, Idaho, power lines go to www.stopb2h.org.

Carol Glaser
Baker City

Someone was missing from governor's debate

I am writing to thank the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association for hosting the first gubernatorial debate of 2022.

I was watching the debate you hosted, and noticed someone was missing. Of the multiple candidates running for governor of Oregon, only three of them were invited to attend. A duly elected Libertarian candidate, R. Leon Noble, had been excluded, and I would like to know why.

Noble earned the nomination of the Libertarian Party of Oregon during the primary election held in June. Unlike other "minor" parties, Libertarians do not need to spend millions of dollars on a primary campaign in order to ensure ballot access.

Could it be that Noble was excluded because, in this day of "pay-to-play" politics, he has yet to raise the millions of dollars? Betsy Johnson is still collecting signatures to appear on the November ballot. Noble has no such hurdle to overcome, yet he was excluded from the debate.

Are you trying to silence candidates who haven't "paid their way" into the governor's race? Or are you concerned that the people of Oregon might hear a message that disturbs the status quo? Most Oregonians can agree that neither Tina Kotek, Christine Drazen, nor Johnson represent them. Why can't those disenfranchised voters hear from a candidate who will?

For more information on the Libertarian candidate for governor, please visit his website, SetOregonFree.com.

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