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Opinion

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OUR VIEW

Congress must 'let them stay, or make them go'

We must clarify our position on the disposition of 12 million illegal immigrants living in the United States.

We continue to believe the answer is to offer illegal immigrants with otherwise clean criminal records temporary legal status and a path to permanent residency (but not citizenship)

after 10 years if they meet strict requirements. We think the border should be secured.

A viable guestworker program must be established, and employers must verify the work status of their employees.

Only Congress can do this, and we think Congress should act.

A reader correctly points

out that Congress has acted. Under long-standing statute, undocumented and unauthorized entry into the United States is illegal, and such persons illegally entering are subject to deportation.

We've never thought otherwise.

But perhaps we have not been clear that we do not support

the status quo, which supports ongoing criminality. We want Congress to pick between the only two alternatives — "let them stay, or make them go."

More clearly, Congress should change the law and grant them temporary legal status, or fund the executive branch's enforcement of current statutes and provide for their orderly

repatriation. It seems reluctant to do either.

If we are to honor the rule of law, the 12 million cannot be allowed to stay in the shadows as they have for decades.

Let them stay in the light, or make them leave in the light. Congress must make the hard choice of what law it wants to uphold.

OUR VIEW

Every county should have an ag commission

Washington's Pierce County Council has appropriated \$25,000 to re-establish the county's agriculture commission.

It's a positive development.

Though ag commissions in Washington serve only in an advisory capacity, producers and ag groups say having an official forum in which to present the views of farmers and ag businesses on policy matters would serve agriculture's interests.

The county disbanded the ag

commission during the Great Recession amid budget concerns. The Farm Bureau, at the county and state levels, advocated restoring the advisory board partly in response to a debate in Pierce County over how much land should be designated "agricultural resource lands."

Environmental groups said increasing the number of acres with that label would protect farmland from urban sprawl. Some farmers said that zoning — a mixed bag of benefits and restrictions — may preserve

farmland, but it wasn't enough to preserve the business of farming and complained about not being consulted.

The county code calls for the county executive to appoint seven voting members to the agriculture commission. Five must be producers.

We're happy Pierce County farmers will soon have another venue to tell their story. We hope other counties not now served by such a panel will see the merit and establish ag commissions of their own.



Capital Press File
A Washington state dairy farm. Pierce County, Wash., has re-established its county agriculture commission.

Oregon needs stronger leadership to improve forest health, prevent fires

By KNUTE BUEHLER
For the Capital Press

Guest
comment
Knut Buehler



This summer's wildfire season has traumatized Oregonians across our state with more than 500,000 acres burned, so far, this summer. Families have lost homes and livelihoods. The special places where we hike, bike and camp are scarred or still burning. We've endured weeks of thick wildfire smoke creating public health emergencies and causing school activities and other events to be canceled. The courageous men and women fighting Oregon's fires deserve our deep appreciation because without them, this crisis would have been much worse.

The southeastern United States has hurricanes and the Midwest has tornadoes. We have wildfires, and each year our wildfire seasons have grown longer and the fires more severe. The impacts of forest overcrowding, drought and climate change are altering our forests and grasslands, making them more vulnerable to fires, insects and disease.

Simply stated, our forests and public lands are in trouble and Oregon needs stronger leadership and new policies to save them.

Nearly half of the forests in Oregon are owned by the federal government. Thousands of acres of these forests are at immediate risk of catastrophic wildfire, insects and disease. A century of wildfire suppression, worsened by the more recent policies discouraging timber harvests and thinning, have resulted in unnaturally overcrowded forests and high tree mortality. In fact, the U.S. Forest Service's most recent Forest Inventory Analysis found that Oregon has 571,000,000 standing dead trees, with a large majority on federal forests.

From the Chetco Bar Fire in Southwest Oregon to the Eagle Creek Fire in the Gorge, we're witnessing what happens when fires ignite on federal lands and are allowed to grow and spread to nearby communities. Science now clearly shows that actively managed forests have fewer dead trees and are more resilient to fires. As we've seen with fuels reduction near Central Oregon's Milli Fire, fires become less severe and easier to con-

tain on forests that have been thinned. As governor, I'll replace the decades of preservationist dogma that has flourished under Kate Brown with science-based, common-sense forest management policies.

We should utilize Oregon's modern, efficient forest products businesses to create more family-wage jobs by restoring the health of our federally owned forests. Hamstrung by her fidelity to narrow special interests, Governor Brown has done little to either lead or raise awareness of the need better forest management policies that can benefit both our environment and economy.

Instead, Governor Brown has proposed cutting state fire protection programs, done little to use the federal "Good Neighbor Authority" to allow Oregon to help treat federal lands, and pursues policies that do nothing to address the real climate change impacts of allowing our forests to burn.

If we're serious about reducing carbon emissions, Governor Brown would support efforts to expedite fuels reduction projects on public lands. In 2007, for example, emissions from Oregon forest fires produced enough greenhouse

gases to equal Oregonians' 3.5 million cars being driven for three years. Rather than allowing our unhealthy forests to burn, we can put Oregonians to work harvesting trees from overcrowded forests and sequester carbon as manufactured wood products. The wood can also be used to promote green buildings through the use of cross laminated timber.

Having grown up in Douglas County, I have a unique appreciation for the economic and social value of healthy, productive forests. And living in Central Oregon, I've witnessed first-hand the devastation that arrives with each fire season. As governor, I'll be a strong advocate to increase the scale and pace of active forest management and restoration on public lands.

And, rest assured, when the radicalized environmental activists start protesting my leadership and decisions, I won't be intimidated and I won't back down. Oregon's forests and public lands and the lives and livelihoods of Oregonians are too important.

Knute Buehler represents Bend in the Oregon House. He is seeking the Republican nomination for Oregon governor.

Readers' views

Congress has already passed an immigration law

The Capital Press has advocated for total amnesty for over 12 million illegal aliens, for DACA, for DAPA, and has said, of illegal immigrants that, in their place, "we would do the same."

These are all wrong positions, legally and morally. Systematic breaking of American law should not be rewarded. Illegal aliens and DACA recipients have broken American law by illegal entry or overstay, and violated American law every day — every day — by using false/forged/stolen documents to obtain work and benefits, by lying and using false documents on I-9 forms, by tax fraud, driving without licenses and insurance, and so on. These are not minor crimes, and are deeply corrupting to America's Rule of Law.

American citizens are properly prosecuted and punished for such crimes. DACA recipients, and their parents, have no respect for rule of law, and believe that they may pick and choose which laws to obey. This is a deeply corrupting and immoral idea. Perhaps they learned from Mexico's deep corruption that laws have no moral content, but are only something to be dealt with. They fled Mexico, but brought its corruption here.

Complicit in this are many Americans, who likewise are corrupted by using and defending illegal aliens, especially as workers when the employers know they are illegal. These are crimes when committed by American citizens, and are no less crimes, and moral wrongs, when committed by illegal aliens or complicit Americans. Over and over again, the Capital Press justifies law-breaking under a plea of "necessity."

Please note that President Trump did not "end" DACA, a temporary program which would have expired on its own terms. Instead he temporarily extended it, which passing the responsibility to Congress to approve it or not. When you say that "Congress must act," Congress has acted: we have an immigration law. It is illegal aliens and law enforcement who have broken the law and/or failed to enforce the law, and who "must act." Many readers of the Capital Press know illegal aliens, and know precisely of what I write: every day they break the law, and they teach their children by example to break the law.

The 1986 Amnesty was attended by huge amounts of fraud, and extended by outrageous courts for decades for those who were never intended to be eligible. DACA already is attended by huge amounts of fraud, by lack of vetting and interviews, and by approval of those recommended for denial. We are told to be sympathetic to "children" who have "no connection with their home country," yet over 50,000 promptly visited their home countries with Advance Parole, and then obtained Green Cards based on these visits.

I know many Mexican families here, who retain deep family ties with Mexico. In decades of working with legal and illegal Mexican families, I know of scarcely any who lack deep ties to Mexico, and those who can

go there regularly to visit. The "no connection" idea is a myth or lie.

Moreover, DACA children in the U.S. have had the benefit of a free education, some through college, and free health care (not available in Mexico) and years of welfare benefits, which would give them significant advantages if they returned to Mexico, which needs such educated people. Many have abused the U.S. tax system, claiming unqualified dependents, illegally claiming Earned Income Credits, using false/stolen Social Security numbers, and so on. We watch DACA recipients easily leave home to go to college, but then are told they cannot go to Mexico, the major destination of American tourists and where thousands of Americans live. Mexico is an advanced country, No. 12 in the world in GDP. In spite of its very real problems (Have you all visited Chicago or Baltimore recently?), it is an incredibly rich and beautiful country, which needs educated citizens for its culture and economy. We would not be sending DACA recipients or illegal aliens to Hell, but to a great country, which needs and wants them (in spite of the potential loss of billions of dollars in remittances, \$120 billion in total, \$23 billion to Mexico).

Mexico exports its problems to the U.S., and receives \$23 billion in remittances annually, while U.S. employers gain cheap employees. The economic advantages to some are clear, but it is morally wrong.

Alan Gallagher
Canby, Ore.

Wolves needlessly kill bull

We love our DeBrycker Charolais bulls. In 2015, we traveled to Great Falls, Mont., and bought #480, by JDJ Wyman X3006, for \$5,250.

On Sept. 2, #480 was a confirmed wolf kill. He was 3 years old and vigorous and healthy — about 1,900 pounds.

At 6:30 a.m. that morning, we four-wheeled up to our privately owned allotment to scatter out some of our cows onto another privately owned pasture we had leased. #480 was just standing there. When we tried to move him he slowly walked a short distance and laid down under a sage brush. We were gone at most a half-hour. When we got back to him he was dead.

Because there had been around 10 confirmed wolf kills in the forest directly above us, we called our government trapper to come look at him. Upon skinning his face, he found multiple bite marks all over it, under the hide. There were multiple little bite marks under his flanks, on the inside of his upper hind legs and lower belly. In our area, the wolves do not usually eat our cattle. They are only training their pups to kill. They run them to death, then leave.

If you find one of your animals dead — no blood, no visible cause — and you have wolves in your area, call someone in authority to come examine it. Do not skin it yourself.

How did we let these monsters get turned loose on us, and what kind of people enjoy their killing ways?

Sandy Dunham
Dunham Ranch
Indian Valley, Idaho