

Opinion / Political

— EDITORIAL —

HB3093: Reciprocity bill needs to pass as is

Representatives Cliff Bentz, Kim Thatcher and Bill Post are the Chief co-sponsors of a Concealed Handgun License reciprocity bill that is long overdue.

There are 12 chief and regular sponsors of this bill in total—11 Republicans and 1 Democrat.

We're fully in support of their efforts and praise them for this bill.

But wouldn't you know it, the liberal gun-grabbers who backed the Bloomberg-funded, absolutely absurd and unenforceable SB941—the private sales registration bill that just passed along party lines—are out to muddy the clear waters of HB3093.

As drafted, HB3093 is a simple reciprocity bill, mirroring laws that exist in so many other states, which will allow a trained and licensed CHL holder from another state to carry across state lines into Oregon without breaking the law.

The description of the bill is this: "Provides persons licensed to carry concealed handgun in another state with protections provided to persons with Oregon concealed handgun license if other state [that has no less stringent handgun competency requirement than] recognizes Oregon concealed handgun licenses and requires handgun competency to obtain license that is similar to requirement in Oregon."

The bill doesn't increase revenue or cost more to implement. With no financial impact, it simply does what it intends: Opens up reciprocity between states.

The bill sailed through the House with only one "no" vote coming from anti-gun zealot Rep. Barbara Warner.

In a strange local twist, Warner is the sister-in-law of former Baker County Commissioner, Fred Warner, Jr. Conversely, one of the "regular" sponsors of the bill, Rep. Jodi Hack,

also has local ties in that she's the sister of former Baker County Clerk Tami Green.

At the time this issue went to print, the bill was stalled in the Senate Judiciary Committee with the Democrats voting on May 26 to keep it there and not send it to the floor for a vote. Another "work session" in that committee was scheduled for yesterday. The head of the Senate Judiciary Committee, by the way, is Sen. Floyd Prozan-ski, the chief sponsor of SB941.

Right now the committee has a pro tempore president, Sen. Ginny Burdick, another staunch supporter of SB941.

The reason for the stall is that the anti-gun crowd is attempting to stuff this good bill so full of legislative bloat that it ceases to be the clean, simple bill it was intended to be. The proposed amendments tie it back and forth to SB941—for some reason.

The Oregon Firearms Federation points to one bizarre change. "Under this amendment you can now loan a firearm, to someone you know, for a whole seven days! Of course, you will still have to subject that person to a background check, but now, under this great compromise, you could invade their privacy and subject them to the failed background check system in the privacy of your own home by calling the State Police and registering your gun to your friend over the phone instead of dragging them to a gun store and paying whatever fee the dealer wanted to charge. The police can, of course, still delay or deny with no justification, as they do now. This is nonsense and solves nothing."

If SB941 so was beneficial it needed to pass, why less than a month later, are amendments being added to not only correct it, but to corrupt what would be this new common sense reciprocity law?

Senators Chuck Riley, Susan McLain and Val Hoyle are currently facing recall efforts as a direct result of their SB941 votes. Riley, in particular was heavily donated to during his race by a gun-control group also funded by former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg. More recall petitions are rumored to be forthcoming. We sure hope so.

In the meanwhile, it would be nice if these apparently confused individuals in the Oregon Senate would just pass HB 3093 as is.

—The Baker County Press Editorial Board

— LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

The shell game

To the Editor:

It's been described as a shell game, it's been delivered as a saving grace for the "sustainability" of our nation, and it is so important that is has taken at least five forest supervisors and eight years to complete but one thing is for certain, they don't want you knowing what you're getting in the travel management plan, and they surely do not want you having a true voice in the discussion.

Currently the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest is working on Subpart A of the plan, this part is where the Forest Service decides how many and what roads are needed (or more importantly not needed) to manage the forest. One would think the supervisor's office would hold meetings with the residents of the region to find out their specific uses and needs and work that into the equation, unfortunately that isn't the case. I personally, have a request in from September of 2014 for the draft document outlining those minimum roads numbers, as of today, I still have no document.

Why you might ask, well it's pretty

simple, because they don't want us to know. See, it's pretty hard to sneak something thru when everyone knows what you're doing, and so the Forest Service simply keeps us in the dark until they file the report with their regional office in Portland. They'll say, we asked them to participate in the maps session and that should count for meeting their needs, but it doesn't.

Currently in Eastern Oregon exists a draft document of the Subpart A report, and the roads it intends to identify for closure. And by the end of 2015 the WWNF will release that plan to the regional office for acceptance.

The question is, will you allow them to do it without standing up and saying no? If you have time, please send an email to Tom Montoya, tmontoya@fs.fed.us requesting the draft Subpart A report and tell him travel management planning cannot move forward until all uses are protected in the Subpart A report.

John George
Bates

Letter to the Editor Policy: The Baker County Press reserves the right not to publish letters containing factual falsehoods or incoherent narrative. Letters promoting or detracting from specific for-profit businesses will not be published. Word limit is 375 words per letter. Letters are limited to one every other week per author. Letters should be submitted to Editor@TheBakerCountyPress.com.

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— GUEST OPINION —

Cattlemen support TPA

Submitted by the Oregon
Cattlemen's Association

Oregon agriculture supports Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) and well crafted trade agreements with Asian and European countries and asks for your support as well. A trade agreement with Asian countries will create huge access to agricultural markets overseas. Oregon exports 80% of the agricultural products it produces and half of that goes outside the United States, the majority of it to Asia and the countries in TPP. As you know, the bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act (TPA), creates a process for negotiating trade deals, by instructing the administration to follow congressional priorities on trade. The bicameral bill includes unprecedented new provisions to improve transparency, boost Congressional oversight and require stronger enforcement for existing trade agreements, U.S. trade laws, any new trade agreement.

These new trade agreements will make it easier for farmers and ranchers to compete by creating a level playing field with overseas competitors.

- International trade is one of the most important economic opportunities for Oregon workers.

- Trade in Oregon supports over 490,000 jobs.

- Trade-dependent jobs grew 7.5 times faster than total employment over the last decade.

- Wages in trade-dependent jobs are 20 to 40 percent higher than non-export jobs. Exports, now totaling nearly \$21 billion, have increased by 40% since the recession year of 2009.

- Greater Portland was one of only four regions in the country to double their exports over the last decade.

Trade is vital to the growth of small

companies, which export directly and supply export-dependent large businesses. A total of 6,001 companies exported goods from Oregon locations in 2012. Of Oregon's exporting companies, 88 percent were small and medium sized enterprises. They generated 34 percent of Oregon's total exports of merchandise in 2012.

In countries where the United States has free trade agreements, exports of U.S. food and agricultural products have grown significantly. Oregon's agricultural exports reached an estimated \$2.3 billion in 2013, up from \$1.5 billion in 2009. Oregon's exports help boost farm prices and income while supporting about 17,400 jobs both on the farm and in related industries such as food processing, transportation and manufacturing.

Oregon produces the best agricultural commodities in the world. Oregon's agricultural exports include wheat, processed fruits and nuts, fresh fruits, processed vegetables, dairy products, wine and beef. The State of Oregon offers domestic and international trade assistance programs to provide help to Oregon farmers, ranchers, fishermen and companies with market development, products development and marketing. Some trade assistance is made possible by the specialty crop grants provided by you through the farm bill. The dollars the federal government provided are being used well and are working for Oregon.

Nationwide, U.S. food and agricultural exports reached a record \$150.5 billion in 2014, supporting more than one million American jobs. Global demand for these products is growing, but so is competition among suppliers.

Trade is essential to our economy. We live in a world where insularity is not possible. Most nations have much higher trade tariffs and other barriers to trade than the United States, causing a disparity to US producers. When trade agreements lower those barriers and tariffs, we win. Our economy wins. Our farmers win.

We respectfully request your continued support by supporting Trade Promotion Authority. If you wish to have your name or your business' name on a letter of support please email us at oca@orcattle.com.

FCC transparency bill takes another step ahead

WASHINGTON, DC

The Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, chaired by Rep. Greg Walden (R-Hood River), last week approved seven bills aimed at improving transparency and process at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The markup follows two hearings by the subcommittee examining these issues with members of the commission and expert witnesses.

"I am pleased that both Republicans and Democrats alike recognize the value of increased transparency at the commission and see a need for congress-

sional action to improve the FCC's decision-making process," said Walden.

"We all realize the incredible reach that technology has in our lives. We live in world where we carry smartphones in our pockets, watch connected televisions at home, and conduct business by video conference in the office. The smallest entrepreneurs carry portable credit card scanners, and the largest corporations build server farms. They store our emails, map our vacations, and secure our transactions. The FCC's work doesn't only impact the industries that it regulates,

but as daily consumers of communications services, our own lives as well. This is why it is so important to make sure that the FCC functions in an effective, transparent manner."

"These bills all go to the same purpose – to tighten up an agency, where only insiders know how to work the levers; to shine light into the dark corners of the FCC. Sunlight is nonpartisan and will show up bad behavior on either side of the aisle. These bills are a good way to instill lasting reform at an agency that impacts us all so deeply, regardless of who sits in the chair," Walden said.

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