

Monologue

Idle Hands

By J. Dana Haynes

(Second of two-part series)

This week, the Department of Health and Human Services released a formal proposal colloquially known as the "Snitch Rule."

It states that any federally funded family planning organization must inform parents before they provide birth control pills, diaphragms or intrauterine devices to minors. The idea, as explained by out-going Secretary of HHS Richard Schweiker, is to curb the number of teen-age pregnancies nationwide, and to build better parent/child communications.

However, the Snitch Rule (which will probably go into effect in February) is drawing fire on nearly every front, including the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and the National Family Planning Reproductive Health Association (NFPRA, pronounced "Nif-pra"), who have co-sponsored a temporary restraining order to block implementation of the ruling.

The HHS is also being blitzed by the American Bar Association, the American Medical Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, 37 state health departments, and many more organizations.

The Oregon Health Division has also thrown its hat into the ring. Health Division Administrator Kristine Gebbie announced last week that if family planning agencies ignore the Snitch Rule (and many of them will), then state money will replace federal money in support of these groups.

Of the \$1.3 million in federal funds that are now funneled through the State Health Division, less than 20 percent goes toward services for teens.

Jesalee Fostering, the executive director for Planned Parenthood in Portland, agrees with the accessment. "Most people think all the people we help are teen-agers. In fact, most of them are older than that."

Thus, in this state at least, the agencies such as Planned Parenthood will continue to operate with strict confidence and respect for privacy, whether or not the Snitch Rule becomes law.

Many people see this as surplanted the traditional roles of parent and child. After all, no one wants their boy or girl to sneak around behind their back, especially when sex is involved.

Some anti-abortion groups are already planning to fight for the implementation of the Snitch Rule. The Oregon Pro-life Action League has come out against the use of state money to by-pass the HHS ruling. One member of the anti-abortion group even went so far as to speak out against Planned Parenthood and the state health division, saying the latter is a "front for Planned Parenthood" in the Sunday *Oregonian*. She went on to say that Planned Parenthood provides brochures, films and "dirty books" to promote abortion and interfere with family communication.

Such utter nonsense is both humorous and frightening, since Planned Parenthood does not provide abortions, nor advise people to abort pregnancies. In point of fact, the agency provides information on, and implementation of, the various alternatives to abortion. But comments like those of the Pro-life activist serve to underscore the need for such organizations as Planned Parenthood.

Family planning organizations exist for one reason: to provide information and protection to women (and men) of all ages. For only through knowledge will this country halt the tidal wave of unwanted pregnancies and the various problems that are part-and-parcel with that including child abuse and the exploding number of medically indigent families.

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Sales tax only alternative

By Doug Vaughan

How do you spell relief? If you are an Oregonian you should spell it S-A-L-E-S T-A-X.

That is if you are seeking economic relief, of course. The only sign of economic recovery in Oregon is a sales tax. Most economists do not see this happening for several years, yet it is a sensible rebound from our economic woes.

There are other alternatives, but none stand up to the sales tax.

A lottery would be successful, but we are only talking about a few million dollars.

The raising of income tax would simply defeat itself. It would offset property tax, and they would be raised dramatically. Therefore, it would affect small businesses—the majority employer of the Oregon work force. With the business bankruptcy at a zenith, and Oregon's income tax burden being second highest nationally, an increase in income tax is simply unheard of.

The lone alternative is a sales tax. In Oregon, a sales tax is not a new idea. Oregonians have defeated half a dozen sales tax proposals dating back as far as 1934. The latest attempt was in 1969 when voters shredded the attempt by a 7-1 margin.

The battle to get Oregonians to accept the sales tax proposals is strictly uphill. But a new sales tax tied in with a property tax relief opens the doors towards acceptance. In 1969, the major problem was inflation. Today, it is rising property taxes mixed with decreasing incomes.

Then this is the type of tax plan that Oregon needs. And this is the type of tax that will be introduced early in the legislative session, that began last week, by representatives Tom Van Vliet (R-Corvallis) and Peter Courtney (D-Salem). A tax in which the rate is not locked into the State Constitution, in which the revenue is only used to offset the existing taxes.

Remember the near-approval of Measure 3 in November. If passed (it was defeated narrowly, 50.1 percent) it would have crippled local governments. Its near success convinced legislatures that something needs to be done to satisfy the supporters of Measure 3. It proves that at least 49.9 percent of the November voters feel property tax in Oregon is too high. A statement that possibly is correct.

Measure 3 did not mean 49 percent of the voters wanted less services—police, fire, education and other local governing services it would

have devastated. Most likely, most of that 49 percent would have voted for tax-relief no matter what the consequences.

It seems most voters would want these services. It is probable then that most no voters only voted no in fear that they would partially lose human services, education and corrections facilities.

According to information gathered in the Jan. 11-17 issue of *Willamette Week*, Property Tax versus 53 percent of Oregon's revenue via taxes.

A proposed 4 percent sales tax would circulate approximately \$800 million to the state and offset property tax about 50 percent (27 percent of Oregon's revenue via taxes).

An argument that is brought up each time a sales tax is proposed is that the tax will hit the low-income the same as the high-income, therefore it would cause a burden on the poor. The argument is well taken and partially accurate. But restrictions on the sales tax that were presented to the legislature will take care of the lingering problem.

One way is to put an exemption on necessities—food, shelter and prescribed drugs. That will help, but to put the heaviest load on those most able to pay they will have to install rebates or tax credit to low-income tax payers.

In a bad economy, and in a state like Oregon that raises money from only two major tax sources (property and income), finances become vulnerable. And when unemployment pushes income tax down, the burden is placed on property tax. This, then, is a situation where the low-income is on the same tax level as the high-income. Oregon is now in this predicament.

For the sales tax to be accepted, Oregonians need assurance that the property taxes will not climb up to the rate they are presently at. Van Vliet and Courtney are planning for that, too.

Another plus is that a sales tax would tax unreported and unearned income when they are used to buy consumer goods, which is now exempt from taxes. It would also gather \$25 to \$50 million from tourists, and tax heavily on those who buy luxurious items.

A sales tax does create problems. But the economic situation we are now in cannot in any means be considered near-perfect. Now is the time where a sales tax is needed to help rescue Oregon economically.

Dialogue

No action taken on incident

Dear The Print:

My name is LeRoy Neal and yes I am mad at the College's lack of action taken in the assaulting acts of one of the Clackamas coaches, paid for with your and my taxes. A coach can punch two players, who verbally assault him by inferring he had incestual affair with his mother. Then after punching them within two minutes he apologizes and justifies his actions. On account of where he comes from, I made a simple comment, why doesn't he go back where he comes from? He

then rushes at me in an attempt to assault me, which I didn't retaliate to.

Late he is interviewed in our school paper and says (and I quote) "under similar circumstances, I'd do it again."

How can our College, or any college for that matter, justify supporting this man (with our taxpayers' money) if he is going to retain this attitude?

The Print is correct in saying Curt Heinze and LeRoy Neal did play for the CCC 1981 soccer team. I made the

All-state team and Curt was a full-time starter for the '81 defending state champs. To say "Neither made the 1982 team" is to infer that we tried out for the '82 team. I denied no implications except those of the inadequacies of the College's investigating services, which also serve and protect the public . . . you and I. Thank you for your time, LeRoy Neal

EDITOR'S NOTE: According to College officials, the incident is under investigation.

Sound off!

Send letters to The Print, Trailer B. Ext. 309, 310. Please type all letters.

Clackamas Community College

