

excess of their investment.

I know from teaching economics for 25 years that most economists would agree with him since one of the best ways to increase the gross domestic production of a country or a state is to educate and train its workforce, and colleges and universities do that. I also know as a former board member at LCC that all 17 community colleges in Oregon have commissioned cost-plus benefit studies that show this to be the case as the return on the taxpayers' investments in higher education exceeds the cost just as professor Khe states in his recent opinion piece.

*Dennis Shine
Springfield*

REEKING TACTICS

How tragic that shadow opponents of Sen. Vicki Walker recently used a push-poll which trashed the Democratic candidate. The so-called survey imparted false information about Vicki's party affiliation, stating she's a Republican!. As far as I know, nobody has admitted responsibility for the fraudulent poll — which seems rather cowardly. Vicki's Republican opponent (Jim Torrey) has denied involvement. The push-poll reeks of a Karl Rove-style

Republican rotten trick.

I hope District 7 voters won't be distracted by mean-spirited campaign tactics aimed at Sen. Walker. You can help defeat the large corporate interests which attack Vicki by working in her campaign. Volunteers are needed in a grassroots effort to beat the big money. Check the Senator's website: vickiwalker.com

Take a look at the senator's record of accomplishments in the Legislature, and the wide recognition she's received. Vicki is an energetic, productive, compassionate state senator. Dozens of major public interest groups are supporting Democrat Vicki Walker. I'm ecstatically proud that my labor union (SEIU 503) has endorsed her. Please work for her and send a check if you can.

*James Jacobson
Eugene*

ABSOLUTISM RULES

It was nice to read that the workers at *EW* don't need a union (letters, 9/14) because they have competitive salaries and you pay 65 percent of their basic health care premiums. Should I also assume that your workers also have an established grievance procedure with neutral, third-

HOLES IN THE SYSTEM

I am writing to clarify my position on the County Public Safety Measure [see cover story last week].

When the county came to the Eugene City Council asking us to support a public safety district, I did not support it because I felt that would have a negative impact on meeting our own funding needs. I did offer to meet with them to work on a proposal I could support.

The county called together mayors and councilors from across Lane County. David Kelly served with me in this capacity. We went to many, many meetings to examine county services and to ask hard questions. We were convinced by the city's own experience as well as from what we have heard from non-profits, treatment and prevention specialists and county departments that there are serious holes in the public safety system that adversely affect the people of Eugene, the people we represent.

David and I worked to ensure that prevention, intervention and treatments services were a key part of the public safety system proposal. We supported a funding mechanism that was not accepted by the Board of Commissioners. However after participating in a couple follow-up meetings, I believe the current proposal is acceptable and needed. More than half of the dollars will be committed to the prevention, intervention and treatment services. Both David and I support the County Public Safety Measure.

Here is the quote that I gave to *EW*: "Let me be frank. I know this public safety measure is not perfect but I think it does take some significant steps in the right direction and I encourage the citizens of this community to support it. It won't happen without us. The system is broken and we need to work on solutions for our community and all of Lane County."

In return, I want assurance that prevention and treatment dollars will not be diverted to incarceration. I want to reduce the funnel of need, not simply build more jail capacity. I applaud the BCC for committing to an internal auditing process that I hope will ensure that our community gets the best possible service provision for their investment.

I also look forward to county leadership that strives to create a more open and positive relationship with our city residents and avoids disparaging comments about Eugene. Eugene voters support valuable services and we are a huge part of the county. I am proud that Eugeneans want a progressive and balanced system of public safety, built on best practices and high performance standards.

*Kitty Piercy
Mayor of Eugene*

"There are times of great beauty on a coffee farm. When the plantation flowered in the begining of the rains, it was a radiant sight, like a cloud of chalk, in the mist and the drizzling rain."

- Isak Dinesen

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