

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

The Oregon Constitution (Article I Section I) clearly states “all power is inherent in the people.” It appears from this article [5/26 “Access Denied”] that “all power” has been shifted to government employees and lobbyists, and the “people” have been left out of the loop. Perhaps we need to amend the state Constitution or perhaps it’s time for a statewide initiative transferring operation of the public records and legal authority to an entity outside of government and controlled by the people?

Freedom of the press is worthless without *access* and without *access* an “informed citizenry” is not possible.

Frank Skipton
Springfield

TIME TO TERMINATE

The city “says” it wants to build public trust; it should start by “doing,” following through on its vow to end the Downtown Urban Renewal District (DTURD).

DTURD failed for 48 years after tens of millions of invested public dollars and was unsuccessful despite subsidies exceeding the entire district’s taxable valuation. After all this speculation, the real property values have hardly increased.

Don’t divert revenue from property taxes paid to keep schools, parks, jails, public safety and infrastructure vital. Don’t privatize public resources for developers by siphoning necessary funds away from indispensable community, city and county services.

Comply with your legislated, adopted plan that states DTURD’s termination in the 2010 amended text. Act in accordance to the words of “terminate” in Section 100 and “shall terminate” in Sections 1200 and 1300 A.

Do not expand the district’s boundary by 10 percent or increase your spending capacity by \$18.7 million beyond the \$46.6 million limit. Terminate DTURD!

City staff suggested bonds and grants that could pay for community-supported projects that can expand the downtown’s high-speed fiber network, redevelop the old LCC building, improve space for the Lane County Farmers Market and upgrade Park Blocks/open spaces without DTURD.

The city needs to take ethical action and terminate DTURD as previously agreed; they’ll show their commitment to follow through on their written words. By not terminating, they’ll demonstrate even more reasons of why the community cannot trust

them. This decision is fundamental in constructing an underlying foundation of good relations.

It’s imperative that the city does the right thing and not betray the public that has voted 70 percent to 30 percent to end DTURD. It’s time to create trust, not demolish it further. The city can use financially sensible means to fund the worthwhile projects mentioned above. The issue is about how the city can get creative and obtain the money resources necessary to support the four proposed downtown projects in a responsible way.

Thank you Councilor Brown, Taylor and Zelenka for keeping your word. Councilor Poling, it would be a major mistake to not stand by your word. Councilor Clark, Evans, Syrett, Pryor and Poling — these four projects need alternative funding sources.

Keeping taxpayer’s dollars where they are intended would be best for the community’s interests in the long run. Mayor Piercy, this is a pivotal moment for the city. Support an end to DTURD as promised!

Janet Bevirt
Eugene

DELUSIONAL LIBERALS

That someone would choose to support Hillary — or worse, Bernie — shows the basic, ill-educated, uninformed, delusional thinking liberal voters have.

Ian Curtis [5/5 Letters, “Join the Revolution”] I’m glad you’re enthusiastic about being part of America’s democratic process, but you spell out precisely why people below the age of 30 shouldn’t vote: You haven’t lived or experienced enough life to make a truly informed decision. Being part of the video game generation who screams for \$15 an hour to work your summer job — which should be a stepping stone (not a career) — and for people to hand you everything for free, teaches you nothing about life and the hard work it takes to be successful.

Liberals want to vilify the “evil, corrupt 1 percent.” Yet, they fail to have the fundamentals of how that undermines America as a whole. You hate people for working hard and being successful. You point and blame them for your personal failures. You say they are greedy. How is it not greedy to steal their money to supplement your failures? This is bass-ackwards thinking.

Work a hard physical job, provide for

HOT AIR SOCIETY BY TONY CORCORAN

Of Corruption and Conflict of Interest

The scene for Oregon’s November general election just got clearer with the primary results. Although I haven’t seen detailed demographics, one statewide fact sticks out: Democrats turned out; Republicans didn’t. According to the Oregon secretary of state’s office, Dems turned out more than 66 percent of their party members, while R’s turned out less than 58 percent. Doesn’t sound like much of a margin until you consider that statewide the D’s turned out more than 230,000 more voters than the R’s.

That imbalance was more extreme in Lane County, where Dems outperformed R turnout by a two-to-one margin, 60 percent to 30 percent. This could be significant in November.

The presidential primaries played out weirdly. Practically eliminated from the race by the time he reached Oregon, Bernie correctly predicted he would win if turnout was high. It was, and he won damn near a landslide, 56 percent to 43 percent. On the Republican side, you could say Trump did win in a landslide — 64 percent of the vote statewide. But the only other names on the ballot, Cruz and Kasich, had already dropped out of the race! So less than two thirds of Oregon’s Republicans voted for the Donald. That says something.

Primaries ended several races here locally. Lucy Vinis won the Eugene mayor’s race by a margin that stunned everyone. Progressives were hoping for a November runoff at best; instead she left Mike Clark and all his late money standing in the dust. Progressives prevailed, and Kitty Piercy’s legacy as mayor is reinforced.

Democrat Julie Fahey ran a hard-fought race, defeating James Manning in the House District 14 primary to replace Val Hoyle. It is easy to see why Manning received a wide range of endorsements, as did Fahey. Both are great community contributors, and I have high hopes we’ll see James Manning in a future elected position.

Tough to watch Val Hoyle lose her primary for secretary of state. Late money played a role in the campaigns of all three Democratic candidates, and the race broke Brad Avakian’s way at the end by a margin of 4 percent. The presence of NARAL in a three-way race between three pro-choice candidates was baffling, as was the U.S. Humane Society attack on Val. Both of these organizations had no business in this race, obviously they have more money than they need, and they were simply punishing Val as majority leader for decisions made by Speaker Tina Kotek and the House Dems during the past two sessions of the legislature.

Val will land on her feet — she is one tough lady. In fact, there she was Friday, three days after the election, making a pitch at the Sponsors, Inc., annual fundraiser.

It will be easy for Democrats to rally around Avakian in November when they consider whom the Republicans chose to run against him. Dennis Richardson — truly the most arrogant man I ever served with in the legislature — sent Sid Leiken hikin’ by a four-to-one margin statewide; that’s not a landslide, that’s an asskicking.

Richardson campaigned as the guy who exposed Kitzhaber’s “corruption” and self-describes himself as “incorruptible.” This is the guy who was known as Representative TIAA KREF during the 2003 legislative session when we worked on PERS reform. Richardson’s solution was to abolish PERS and give public employees a 401K managed by none other than the aforementioned retirement plan he represented. Did he declare a potential conflict of interest? Hell no.

Dennis Richardson once encouraged a Human Services Ways and Means Committee to stop funding prenatal care for Oregon’s poor because, by golly, his wife had nine children and she knew what to do after the first one. Seriously. So really, it won’t be hard to rally around Avakian in this race.

But, enough about politics. Jeannie’s got me hooked on watching *Game of Thrones*. (No imp jokes, please!) The plot is overwhelming: so many characters, so many relationships. I’m just a simple country boy. For example, I’m confused: Will all those inter-married queens and kings still be cousins after their divorces? ... just like in Cottage Grove?

Bad joke, I know. But being an orphan with no knowledge of my ancestry, genetics is a crapshoot to me. I even sent my cheek swabs and some money to the *National Geographic*, only to find out I’m 87.837 Irish-English descent! No surprise there. But I also discovered that I’m less Neanderthal percentage-wise than most of my readers and friends had suspected. I plead the Fifth Amendment on disclosure of the actual number. Stay tuned.

Tony Corcoran is a retired state employee and former state senator.