

INCONCEIVABLE

Hillary Rodham Clinton has dedicated her entire life to the betterment of all people, including the world. All of us.

It is inconceivable to me that a man who spent the last 70 years enriching himself is even competing for a public office, much less the presidency of my country. God help us!

*Philip Byron Renow
Cheshire*

STRUCTURAL CHANGE

Those who continue to ramp on about the presidential elections are right in their criticism of the lack of choice. Often their refusal to participate becomes a self-congratulatory, self-righteous role. But, not playing the game does not a democracy make. The problem is not the lack of choice; it is the total absence there-of. Falling into despair and indifference is exactly what feeds the system. By the way, the system is not broken. It is "fixed." And it is ticking along quite perfectly in its design as created by those who historically benefit

— the international corporations and the super-rich. The slogan of French protesters in 1968 is more appropriate than ever: "No re-plastering, the structure is rotten." We need structural change that places people back on top, government below us and corporations beneath where they belong, controlled by a government of, by and for the people. We can't whine and do nothing about the democracy vacuum. Democracy can only be born from the grass roots by the strength of people and communities asserting and establishing our democratic rights to protection of our health, safety and welfare in the places where we live our lives.

*Richard Gross
Deadwood*

GREEN PARTY ENDORSES SEMPLE FOR CITY COUNCIL

The Lane County Pacific Green Party voted to endorse Emily Semple for Ward 1 Eugene City Council. Both Semple and her opponent, Joshua Skov, spoke to members on Oct. 9 and were asked questions

afterward.

In open discussion prior to the vote, Semple's experience and positions on environmentalism, sustainability, homelessness and neighborhood protection resonated with the membership.

Greens were concerned about the consultancy report Skov was hired to do prior to EWEB okaying the construction of the air polluting Seneca biomass (wood by-products) incinerator. His study concluded the project would be "carbon neutral." However, emitting 194,000 tons of CO2 and particulate pollution annually (2015), it is the second largest greenhouse gas source in Lane County.

When asked, Skov declined to answer how much he was paid for the report, saying it was not "greenwashing" but a technically oriented study, and also EWEB, not him, made the final decision.

During discussion, Greens noted that climate change experts, including Bill McKibben of 350.org, have strongly opposed biomass energy.

Semple pointed to her forestry science

background. She noted that wood biomass should not be burned either in the forest after clearcutting or in urban biomass incinerators, but be left to provide composting nutrients for new forest growth, food for an ecology of plants and animals. She also referenced wind and solar as more sustainable, renewable sources of energy.

The Lane County Pacific Green Party urges you to support Democrat Emily Semple, and to consider Green candidates in state and federal races.

*Trisha Driscoll and John Thielking
Lane County Pacific Green Party*

PLANT DIET

It seems like there is always some special observance around the corner. There is even a World Day for Farmed Animals. It's observed fittingly on Oct. 2 (Gandhi's birthday). It's intended to memorialize the tens of billions of animals abused and killed for food around the world.

My first instinct was to dismiss it. But, I wanted to understand the impact of my diet and my food dollars on others.

VIEWPOINT BY ROBERT WARREN

I Got It Wrong

THE \$7 MILLION GIVEAWAY, PART II

Sooner or later it happens. You write or say something and then you have to come clean and admit that you just got it wrong. In "The \$7 million giveaway" (*EW*, 9/1) I argued that our local officials got little or nothing in return for extending the enterprise zone benefits for Broadcom, the company that purchased the former Hynix site, an additional two years. I concluded that without any new requirements, the additional \$7 million in property tax waivers was not an investment at all, it was a just a "giveaway" of much-needed tax revenue.

With the county and city constantly in need of money to fill budget shortfalls, it's easy to look at that additional \$7 million as funds needed to fill budget gaps. And, while it is true that both the City Council and the County Commission voted approval of the two-year extension, without adding any additional requirements for the money, a deeper look at the issue caused me to reach a different conclusion.

No one actually gives Broadcom money. It would be forgiven property taxes for the five years of the enterprise zone, based on the level of investment in the property. It would continue to pay the current property taxes. After five years Broadcom would pay the full property tax load on the dramatically increased value of the site. We forgive taxes we would not be getting anyway, while creating significantly increased property taxes after the waiver ends.

Until Broadcom bought the site, it sat idle for years, possibly awaiting demolition and continuing reductions in property tax revenue. Broadcom came calling even before the online auction for the site was to take place and no one knew who it was. To maintain confidentiality, Broadcom was represented by a site selection consultant.

Broadcom, like many large corporate clients seeking an expansion or relocation, maintained confidentiality by using a site selection consultant to determine, among other factors, community support before making a commitment involving many millions of dollars. For our local economic development team, whoever that was, it would be reasonable to assume the involvement of such a consultant indicated this was the "real deal" to be taken seriously and the first credible client looking at the former Hynix site in a very long time.

This points to one of the issues that often plagues economic development projects, secrecy. Projects come with code names and site selection consultants to maintain confidentiality and secrecy. No one wants to talk on the record. Many clients insist on total confidentiality for siting a project. And secrecy is also part of the culture of

economic development, even though it often creates mistrust and suspicion on the part of the public.

I believe that finding a credible client to renovate and invest in the Hynix site for a manufacturing facility is in our community's best interest. If we were to lose this opportunity, another might be far in the future, if ever. The two-year extension of West Eugene Enterprise Zone is one of the few discretionary incentives we have to show community support and encourage a company like Broadcom to locate here.

And remember, no one writes a check to Broadcom. That's one of the beauties of the enterprise zone as an incentive. The benefits only come from, and are based on, the increased value of the facility. The first three years are automatic, based on location. If you are in the zone and meet the qualifications, you get the first three years of property tax abatement on the increased assessment while continuing to pay the current rate. This is available to any company expanding into an enterprise zone.

The additional two years needs to be approved by the local governments. In this case, they could have nickel-and-dimed Broadcom by demanding some additional token requirements to placate some constituents. But they didn't play that game and I believe now that it was the correct decision. In order for Broadcom to get the full \$21 million in benefits over the five-year period, they will likely spend hundreds of millions on improvements to the site. Improvements that translate immediately to hundreds of living wage construction jobs even before the site is operating, and hundreds more when it is.

Were the votes by the Eugene City Council and Lane County Commission to grant the additional two years a "giveaway" or an "investment?" I understand there are a lot of folks who just don't agree with public incentives at all. I get that for them, it will always be a giveaway. I just do not agree. In my opinion this was an opportunity that we could not afford to miss.

As much as I dislike admitting I was wrong, I was. If Broadcom does what is required to get the tax breaks, if it creates hundreds of living wage jobs, if it rehabilitates an aging manufacturing facility and significantly increases property taxes when the waiver ends, then the votes were not a giveaway. They truly were an investment in our future, and the right thing to do.

Robert Warren has been a Eugene resident since 1984. He retired in 2012 as regional business development officer for the Oregon Business Development Department for Lane, Benton and Linn counties, and has had a long career in economic and community development, forest policy and natural resources planning.