

SKOV FOR COUNCIL

Congratulations on your masterful promotion of Emily Semple in the Oct. 20 issue. You not only gave her the cover but also quoted her in the article "Who Runs the City."

Her cavalier attitude toward climate change — less City Council discussion and more tree planting (*EW* endorsements, 10/20) — belies any pretense at understanding the council's responsibility for enforcing the Climate Recovery Ordinance. Josh Skov does understand this responsibility of the council and has the intelligence, tenacity and preparation to act accordingly.

As a former city councilor representing the inner-city neighborhoods and the Whit before it was the Whit, I know the value of prepared, pragmatic progressive voices on the council. I think Josh is such a voice and I hope the voters of Ward 1 share my assessment.

Shawn Boles
Eugene

Editor's Note: In addition to the print letters, please go to eugeneweekly.com for more Skov endorsements.

A FAIRY TALE

Once upon a time, in a land far, far away, it was a dark and stormy night in the autumn of our discontent. Though it was the best of times, it was also the worst of times: The less-than-charming prince, having become a small-handed, underhanded, fire-breathing dragon with weird hair and strange complexion, was feeling his oats (or maybe it was just his hemorrhoids). Searching hither and yon, over hill and over dale, he hit the dusty trail in his tour bus in the quest for a beautiful princess to work his wiles upon.

He found her working at her spinning wheel and, being the prick her fairy godmother warned her about, slipped roofies into her curds and whey, whereupon he non-consensually kissed the sleeping beauty and grabbed her Puss-in-Boots, believing he could do so with impunity because he was rich and famous.

The princess, who had by that time already overcome her sensitivity to peas, vanquished the Wicked Witch of the West, subdued her narcissistic and equally wicked stepsisters, left those sniveling dwarfs to do their own housekeeping, overcome food poisoning from that apple and broke

her bitch-of-a-mother's mirror, cut her hair and escaped the tower, found her lost glass slipper and donned a pair of ruby slippers ... upon awakening and realizing what was happening, gagged, vomited, wiped her mouth and decided she didn't want to kiss this toad of a frog again. So she kicked him in the balls and told him to f*** off ... then picked up her kitty cat and rode off into the sunset alone over the river and through the woods on a bicycle built for two and voted for Hillary.

Richard Leach
Coburg

SCARE TACTICS

The No on Measure 97 letters and ads are laden with the phrase "massive corporate tax increase." Let's take a closer look.

Corporations that make less than \$25 million in gross receipts pay a minimum tax of \$30,000. Measure 97 will not change that. Do the math — it is anything but massive. Currently, small businesses are paying a much higher tax rate; the large C corporations are truly not pitching in their fair share.

Measure 97 is simply asking that those big C corporations making over \$25 mil-

lion pay an additional 2.5 percent on gross receipts over that \$25 million. A 2.5 percent increase at those levels is hardly massive and will marginally move Oregon from dead last position in corporate tax in the nation.

What is massive is the impact that the estimated \$3 billion in revenue will have on education, healthcare and senior services. Keeping in mind that businesses and families will not move to Oregon if our schools and services are in such poor shape, it is a bogus argument for opponents to suggest that the money would be diverted. Why would it with those services in such desperate need? It is in our common interest to fund them.

Opponents would have us believe that corporations making those amounts in gross receipts would have difficulty paying their respective tax rates. This while corporate profits and CEO pay have skyrocketed in the last decade.

To suggest that the tax would be passed on to consumers is speculative hyperbole and a scare tactic. Market competition would negate that action.

Zenia Liebman
Junction City

HOT AIR SOCIETY BY TONY CORCORAN

We All Scream for Ice Cream!

TAKING A LOOK AT MEASURE 97

As you know, dear readers, the Hot Air Society is not only a social drinking club; we are also a 527 Super-PAC. We secretly authorized the distribution of Samsung Galaxy Note 7 smartphones to the Donald Trump, Bud Pierce, Art Robinson and Dennis Richardson campaigns. The incendiary phone has been blamed for one house fire, a burning Jeep and several alarming moments on airplanes. We felt it was the least we could do for them.

Since you know how we feel about the aforementioned clown college candidates, let's visit Measure 97, the most critical issue on the ballot.

Measure 97 is complex. For 10 years in the Legislature, I advocated for a similar gross receipts tax. Democrats were not in control back then, but the arguments for and against the tax were identical.

Here's what current House Revenue Committee Chair Phil Barnhart had to say in a recent email exchange with our mutual friend, L.S., a local journalist. L.S. assumed I was supporting Measure 97 and said she had some misgivings about the measure after reading an anti-97 pitch in the *R-G* by the heirs to Umpqua Dairy. She asked why the measure's authors chose to tax sales rather than profits. I responded by describing the legislative history of the gross receipts tax and the impending \$1.3 billion shortfall in the 2017-19 state general fund. In conclusion I muttered:

"Anyway, Phil makes a persuasive argument that 97 goes after forgone profit lost to the state by bad federal tax enforcement on profits vs. sales. This may or may not have anything to do with Umpqua Dairy's tax liability. GMAFB! Over \$25 million in Oregon? Tax increases are never popular. Without this particular tax solution at this time ... Oregon's in deep doodoo. \$1.3 B deficit in next biennium ... Not one Republican has proposed an alternative ... say no more. Ask Phil."

I copied Phil on the email and he sent this unsolicited response:

L.S.,

Tony raises some points I did not know about the bias of the owners of Umpqua that might raise skepticism. Please note that the article contains no numbers. There is no way to check to determine if the arguments are correct or not. Tony makes the correct point that the federal tax law that Oregon also uses to define profits is fatally flawed. Corporations used to pay about 18 percent of our General Fund and it is now about six percent and headed lower. About 50 of the largest corporations in the country, you could probably name them, will pay 80 percent of this tax.

These are the same fine folks who, like The Donald, have figured out how not to pay taxes based on profits. The huge advantage of a minimum tax (at a much lower rate than the profits tax) based on sales in Oregon is that it is much simpler to calculate and therefore much harder to manipulate. These very large corporations have avoided paying their fair share for a long, long time. They need to pay up. This is the best way to get there. Please note that these corporations use our resources to support their businesses just like those who actually pay taxes. They should pay a minimum tax for education, health and senior services whether they make a profit or not. That theory is already well established in our property tax law. Sales is a good estimator of the corporation's use of government resources.

It turns out that profits (as currently defined) are not.

If M97 passes, I expect to spend '17 looking at requests from companies like Umpqua Dairy who will be asking for forbearance. If they can prove they are a special case, they will get it. At this point I have no idea. We did that after M67 passed as well and changed the law as it applied to a couple special cases.

Take a look also at the website at abetteroregon.com.

Only you can answer the basic question for yourself: Should we continue to cheat public school kids and Oregon's future or should we risk a few unintended consequences of a new but very much needed tax?

Phil

Couldn't have said it better myself. Anti-97 corporations have raised more than \$17 million so far to defeat the measure. Contributors include Wells Fargo, Bank of America, Citigroup, Chevron, Comcast, Costco, Albertsons, Safeway and Fred Meyer parent company Kroger.

Stay tuned and vote, dammit!

Former state Sen. Tony Corcoran of Cottage Grove is a retired state employee.

