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**HOT AIR SOCIETY** BY TONY CORCORAN

# Circle Jerks

LOOKING FOR LOVE IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES

I've had an exciting couple of months since we last visited. It's been nice to be away from politics for a while. I did an enjoyable Eugene City Club gig with Jack Roberts. And I attended my 50th high school reunion in Roswell, New Mexico. What a hoot! I was adopted from Ireland at the age of 3 and didn't become a naturalized U.S. citizen until I was 7; so I was technically a Roswell alien for 4 years. Classmates said it explained my political path later in Oregon.

Anyway, back to reality. Politics is upon us once again. After reading the recent news about my sad former colleague, Sen. Jeff Kruse, I can now understand why those Republicans had such a hard time getting anything done in Salem last session! In Jeff's case, it was apparently because of his lonely, solitary, secretive research on masturbatory internet chat room blackmail schemes.

Jeff gives new meaning to the phrase "getting caught with your pants down." On the other hand, so to speak, maybe a guy just busted for inappropriate touching by two female Senate colleagues came up with a novel solution to his "handsiness." He was simply in therapy, dear reader.

When confronted with a video of himself shirtless at home chatting to a topless lady while allegedly choking his chicken, the wily veteran lawmaker used the "split screen" defense. According to *The Oregonian*, Jeff explained to the State Police that he "received a video of himself with his shirt off that had been edited to remove his trousers and add a nude male lower half."

He described the whole scene as an attempted extortion campaign against him and said that he was chatting online with women as part of his own investigation into the tactics of digital schemers. He later admitted to *The Oregonian* that no one tried to extort money from him and that he chatted with women online because he was searching for a relationship. Who'd a thunk?

Speaking of Republican relationships, I finally heard from my old buddy, Congressman Greg Walden. After our split-up over his assault on Obamacare and 400,000 Oregonians, I didn't think I'd hear from Greg again. But he sent me an email the other day.

Dear Tony,

For too long, hardworking taxpayers have struggled with an outdated tax code that is too complicated and takes away too much of your money for the government to spend. The House is working this week on the legislation that will come to the House floor before Thanksgiving.

While reform is never easy, and always subject to partisan hyperbole, we do know two important facts about this draft plan courtesy of the nonpartisan Tax Foundation analysis:

1. Annual, after-tax income for the middle class will rise in every state.
2. The U.S. economy will grow by 4 percent and create 975,000 new jobs as a result.

You can share your thoughts with me by responding to this email: [Representative.Greg.Walden@mail.house.gov](mailto:Representative.Greg.Walden@mail.house.gov).

My response?

Dear Greg,

Does this mean we get two turkeys this Thanksgiving? Why do you hate Oregon?

Your "nonpartisan Tax Foundation" is a well-known conservative think tank. Oregon will take the worst hit in the nation by the Republican plan's elimination of individual tax breaks for state and local income tax deductions, according to Bloomberg Economics. And our local progressive think tank, Oregon Center for Public Policy, says that not only will this tax cut benefit the richest the most, it will also cause a \$1.5 trillion federal budget deficit over the next decade.

With regards to this budget proposal and your past assault on Oregon's poorest Medicaid recipients, Greg, I'd rather have you back in the Oregon Senate than serving in Congress. After all, you already turned your back on 400,000 of your own constituents in the Fifth Congressional District by trying to dismantle the Oregon Health Plan.

Besides, the Republicans in our state senate are a bunch of fun guys. Take Jeff Kruse, for example. He apparently has all kinds of clever and manly diversions to keep him from doing any damage to his constituents. And Jeff has an open door policy, due to the fact that Senate President Peter Courtney ordered Jeff's office door in the capitol removed because Kruse persisted in smoking in there. And apparently Jeff's got quite a way with women, if you're into that sort of stuff. Just keep your shirt and your drawers on, and you'll be fine. Welcome back to Oregon.

Your pal,  
Tony

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

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