

## TINY, PITIFUL GESTURES

There seems to be a perception among local politicians that the homeless and their advocates don't appreciate the tiny pitiful efforts of local governments to provide emergency homeless shelter.

That's not true. We do appreciate their tiny pitiful efforts; we just know that they're tiny and pitiful.

The Eugene City Council and the Lane County Board of Commissioners favor what they call "pilot projects" — car camps, rest stops, etc. — kept as small as possible and never significantly expanded, even though they work.

They're responding not to the desperate need for emergency shelter but the desire of middle-class single-family home suburbanites to keep poor people out of "their" neighborhoods.

At the Dec. 11 City Council work session, Emily Semple, to her credit, asked the rest of the council how many more will die on the streets before the city provides enough shelter. The tiny pitiful response was to use a city email list to try to get more volunteers for the overwhelmed Egan Warming Centers.

Lynn Porter  
Homeless Action  
Eugene

## TOXIC DOUBLE STANDARDS

Can the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA) fulfill its mission of protecting public health by implementing current proposals to "streamline" emission regulations, grant exemptions and reduce pollution standards in Oakridge?

Doesn't LRAPA's mission to protect public health overrule enabling large industry to increase pollution to the people's air? For 10 years I have been perplexed how LRAPA allows Lane County's largest polluters like International Paper's biomass incinerator (EWEB's "Green Power") and Kingsford Briquet operations to spew more than 3,000 tons of particulates, 2,000 tons of nitrous oxide and 1,500 tons of sulfur dioxide per year without requiring these huge polluters to reduce emissions.

LRAPA has quantifiable annual estimates of the deaths and respiratory diseases these toxins cause. Restricting the use of firewood to heat homes on "red" air days is understandable, but allowing huge polluters to foul the people's air during "red" days is a double standard.

With the proposed relaxing of Oakridge's air emission standards, it seems LRAPA, LRAPA board member Jay Bozievich and the mayor of Oakridge

have teamed up to accommodate Mr. King's (King Estate Winery) plans to open up a hard-rock gravel mine about a mile east of city limits.

LRAPA staff report states, "Without the new area designations, it will be nearly impossible for businesses to obtain a permit to construct new sources of air pollution in these areas."

Citizens should demand a delay of proposed changes by Dec. 29 and at the Jan. 11 LRAPA board meeting. LRAPA's board minutes for October, November and December are not posted.

Shannon Wilson  
Eugene

## UNSAFE FOR BIKES

Another near-life-threatening crash as an SUV turned right across the bike lane on 18th while my daughter and I returned home from school. That is the way most cyclists are killed in an urban environment. It's similar to a car swerving from the passing lane to an exit off the highway, except I've seldom seen that happen.

The bike lane, I guess, isn't really seen as a lane for traffic. The people on it are not really worthy of a place on the road. They are an inconvenience and relegated to the side.

Our vulnerability, even the loss of our lives, is of little consequence. We'd barely register as we fall under the wheels of an SUV that might never see rougher roads.

Every cyclist I know has experienced this sensation — that his or her life has been imperiled. It happens to us weekly. Bi-monthly. Often, we are actually killed.

Bicyclists are killed or seriously injured proportionally more than any other road user. As more people cycle, this statistic will continue to rise.

I hope when I'm run over, or my daughter is, that the driver is made an example and goes to jail for a long time. I hope there is a lawsuit against the city. There is a precedent for such lawsuits.

We must raise the consequence for killing and imperiling cyclists. The time for treating bicyclists as a nuisance must end. We need safe and equal infrastructure. We are equal human beings with equal rights to the road.

Otis Haschemeyer  
Eugene

## THE PRIVILEGED ARE COMPLACENT

Why does the city of Eugene allow promotion of Christianity in a large banner that stretches over the public right-of-way

## HOT AIR SOCIETY BY TONY CORCORAN

## Expel Greg Walden from Congress!

HIS REPUBLICAN HOUSE TAX GIVEAWAY WILL KILL OREGONIANS

Is it just me? Or are others asking the same existential questions? RYFKM? Tax breaks for the rich? Tax increases for Oregon's workers, educators, firefighters, cops? Who benefits? Uncle Phil? What programs get cut with a trillion dollars less in taxes? Let me guess.

Expulsion sounds kinda radical, right? But there are others who've been expelled or who have quit while facing expulsion. I remember my first year in office (1995) when U.S. Senator Bob Packwood resigned after a senate ethics committee recommended his expulsion due to his gross sexual misconduct and his attempts to enrich himself through his official position.

It's hard enough to re-elect good members of Congress, like our local hero Congressman DeFazio. But *bad* members of Congress are really hard to get rid of once they get elected!

Turns out you can't impeach them or recall them. The House can expel a member but that requires two-thirds of the members present and voting. Granted, it's a pipedream to think that Republican speaker Paul Ryan will throw sidekick Greg "Repeal and Replace" Walden under the bus. That doesn't mean we Oregonians shouldn't demand expulsion based on Walden's outright attack on us and his failure to explain why he sided with rich donors and not his constituents.

There are no specific grounds for an expulsion in the U.S. Constitution; expulsions in both the House and the Senate have generally concerned cases of perceived disloyalty to the United States, or the conviction of a criminal statutory offense which involved

abuse of one's official position.

Greg Walden's one-two tax punch hitting Oregonians harder than most other states is treasonous and an abuse of his political position. He just granted a Republican donor class tax giveaway financed by screwing most Oregonians, whether they're Republican, Democrat, Libertarian, non-affiliated or whatever. He and Paul Ryan decided that excluding our state and local tax exemptions and creating a 10-year trillion-dollar deficit that will eliminate affordable health care, Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security is good public policy. All for the rich. Walden and Ryan have blood on their hands.

The best current evidence that Greg realized that he really screwed the pooch (literally, not figuratively — he committed a terrible mistake) is his current avoidance of the tax topic and his leadership role nationally in attacking Oregonians as a member of Speaker Ryan's leadership team.

The *Oregonian* reported that Walden was totally silent on the effect of his proposed tax breaks on Oregonians, even after Gov. Kate Brown and her challenger Knute "Maybe I'm a Republican" Buehler both confronted Walden with the need to preserve the federal deduction for state and local taxes. Otherwise, the *Oregonian* reported: "[Walden's] proposals could substantially increase taxes for thousands of Oregonians." Also, in Walden's last newsletter, sent a week *after* the Republicans passed their deformed tax "reform," there was nary a word about it. Expulsion is too kind!

While we're at it, let's expel Cedric Hayden, state representative, House District 7. He's one of the three

morons causing us grief here in Oregon by causing a special election on Jan. 23 on Ballot Measure 101. I hate it when politicians can't even be honest, even if they don't admit they're wrong.

Despite the crises at the federal level — whether it's Jerusalem, Judge Moore or the looting of our federal lands — we have a huge special election coming up here in Oregon that we gotta pay attention to: Ballot Measure 101 on Jan. 23, 2018. Hayden and two other ultra-conservatives put this measure on the ballot at the bequest of their rich donors to attack healthcare in Oregon.

Voter turnout is critical. We can only hope that the anger and despair over the national picture doesn't discourage turnout among progressives. We need to turn the anger into "yes" votes on Measure 101. We need to do what voters recently did in Virginia and New Jersey. Angry Democrats turned out and won.

There's so much at stake. Measure 101 protects healthcare coverage for one in four Oregonians, including 400,000 kids. Voting yes means also protecting Oregon seniors and people with disabilities. The voter registration deadline for the Jan. 23 measure is Jan. 2, 2018.

Speaking of 2018: The Oregon Legislature convenes on Feb. 5, Oregon election primaries happen on May 15, and the general election is Nov. 6. And, hopefully Art Robinson wins his primary and is defeated for the fifth consecutive time by Peter DeFazio. Maybe there is a god. ■

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