

letters

HOMES FOR WHAT?

In Henry Houston's article in the 5/30 *EW*, he quotes Jacob Fox, executive director of Homes for Good, saying, "...backing out of the contract would result in a lawsuit and may be a slippery slope that sets a precedent about whom the agency could and couldn't sell property to."

In a society such as ours, changing things can be done in three ways: 1) riot and overthrow bad things by the people, 2) change the laws through the Legislature, or, 3) take the issue to court and have a decision brought down by a judge or jury.

If Homes for Good is taken to court and the final verdict were that they could not sell to corporations such as Seattle-based Evergreen Housing, I would yell 'Hallelujah!!!' from the top of Skinner Butte. If that were the outcome — I say bring on that slippery slope and let's focus on what's needed in Eugene — affordable housing, not market-rate units that the majority of people here in Eugene cannot afford.

Let's do what's right — before the angry masses turn on the so-called decision makers and force change from the bottom up.

Melanie J. Kundert
Eugene

NIMBY CORP

Evergreen Housing Development is a Seattle-based company that plans to develop future market-rate apartments here in the Eugene area, including in the Willamette Greenway. I would label Evergreen Housing Development as a NIMBY corporation.

Please take note that this developer does not build apartment buildings in their own city of Seattle (in Seattle they have remodeled two majestic previous-hotels). Could it be because they throw together poorly constructed apartments like ECCO on River Road that look like crap in ten years? Is it because they make promises to the neighbors that they had no intention to follow through on (thus leaving a mess for the county and city to clean up) like at ECCO?

Maybe because Eugene city planners will bend over backwards to make developers happy even if it costs tax payers thousands of dollars later to fix it.

This NIMBY corp is up against a YIMBY neighborhood here on River Road. This neighborhood says YES to affordable housing — not more cheaply built, unneeded, market-rate apartments.

H.M. Sustaita
Eugene

SHILLS AND KNIGHTS

The Knight Campus for Accelerating Impact deserves far more scrutiny in the context of the University of Oregon budget crisis. While other programs like the Labor Education and Research Center face disproportionate and debilitating cuts, the Knight Campus is slated for just a \$4,000 reduction.

The combined amount of the top three Knight Campus salaries are more than \$1 million, and director Robert Guldberg alone makes \$550,000 a year. Exorbitant executive salaries such as these demonstrate the need to "chop from the top" as the starting point for proposed cuts.

A public event in April with Guldberg glossed over the aspects of his research that reinforce the corporatization of public education. The university administration's mismanagement of money and the profit-driven motivations of Phil Knight's contributions to the UO were also conveniently overlooked.

The most disappointing part of the "Knight" was that audience questions were funneled through one of President Michael Schill's lackeys and a Knight Campus leader, leaving no space for attendees to ask real questions.

Guldberg performed "transparency" by disclosing some relationships with corporations but said nothing about why this could be problematic. Furthermore, questions about equity and the ethics of private funding were ignored.

The touted accelerated scientific impact of the Knight Campus translates to gentrification, corporatization and the development of healthcare that will be

inaccessible to the majority of the people who make UO run. Above all, Knight Campus is designed to contribute to industry and serve as a gateway to profit for rich entrepreneurs.

Nikki Cox
Eugene

AN EDUCATION TAX

Bob Warren highlighted in his editorial (*EW*, 5/30) some of the concerns about the value of the MUPT tax exemption in developing our community. He wonders if the developer benefits really have provided all the good they was supposed to.

A good question. But one of the sure results of MUPT was that it took money away from our state education budget. Let me show you how.

About 50 percent of our county property tax goes to education. The state Legislature covers the education bill with about two-thirds property tax revenue. The other third comes from income tax and other sources.

That's what they fight over every year. That is why we underfund state education every year. And that has been so for the past 20 or 30 years. It is predicted that this will be the case in future years.

I feel that putting many "home owners" in tall buildings will aggravate this problem even more — especially if there is a MUPT exemption on that property.

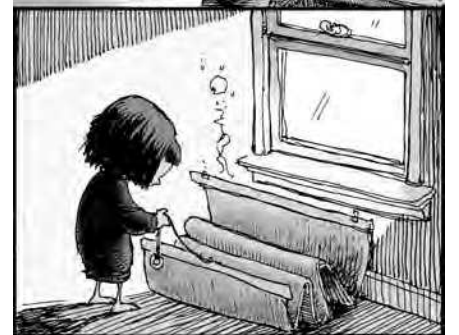
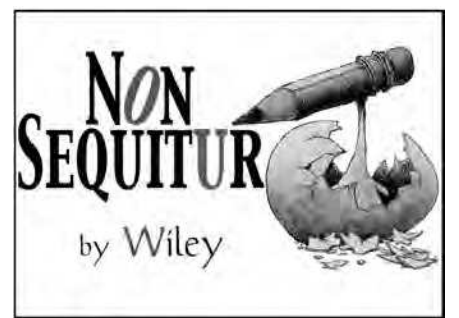
Trying to pay for the increasing needs of education with property taxes is a losing system. It's a broken system.

A sales tax — dedicated — in the state constitution could cover not only 4J but also pre kindergarten and a couple years at community college. We could call it an Education Tax.

Bob Cassidy
Eugene

NO VETERANS DAY

I am saddened to hear that there has been a multitude of veterans who were disappointed that there were no veterans in a Veteran's Day parade two years in a row. I would have written sooner, but after hearing from many as time has progressed, I felt that I would write in



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