

for a healthy level of access to the river for perpetuity, with some lovely modest spaces for comfort or viewing.

I hope, folks of Eugene, you make your interests known if you agree.

Kevin Jones
Eugene

GOODNIGHT, DEMOCRACY

Tuesday night, June 18, Lane County residents addressed the county commissioners on the proposed spray ban initiative and the right to local community self-government initiative (which legally authorizes citizens to write and pass laws to protect our health, safety and welfare, like the spray ban).

Proponents of the ban told personal stories of health harms endured due to aerial herbicide spray exposure, and the science that backs up their heartbreaking stories. Timber industry advocates refuted their claims.

The real issue here, regardless of where you stand on the practice of aerial herbicide spraying, is that 15,000 county residents signed two petitions to refer these measures to the voters. If you don't want to ban sprays, vote against the ban, but don't suggest that the people should be denied access to the ballot box — to be the decision-makers this country so desperately needs us to be.

As a part of democratic government decision-making, the initiative system is the people's voice. It's how we legislate, especially when elected officials don't listen to us.

Yes, commissioners, it is well within your duties to refer these initiatives, so do it. Democracy herself is at stake here.

Michelle Holman
Deadwood

Letters Policy:

We welcome letters on all topics and will print as many as space allows, with priority given to timely local issues. Please limit length to 200 words and include your address and phone number for our files. Email to letters@eugeneweekly.com, fax to 484-4044 or mail to 1251 Lincoln, Eugene 97401.



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Oregon is the New Idaho or Wyoming!

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY OF OREGON JOINS MALHEUR MILITANTS?

OK, I have to turn off my humor button now, dear reader. Things have gotten serious in Salem.

Remember back in May when I wrote about Oregon's Republican senators walking out the first time? And then I found the "Bat Shit Crazy" Baertschiger Gang and their leader Herman stoned out their minds on new recreational drugs recently legalized in Denver, Colorado?

Well now they've left again, maybe for Idaho this time, all because of climate change!

They don't like the weather? Cap and trade carbon emissions apparently drove 'em out of state.

But this time it's serious: They're armed. And Oregon has become the laughingstock of the nation.

A Wyoming Republican senator recently approached one of our former legislators: "We've noticed a lot of the new arrivals in our state are armed militants from Oregon. Could you please ask those people to please stay in Oregon?"

Yep that's right, cattle parads: The Baertschiger Gang has joined up with the Malheur Gang. You remember them don't you? All those armed out-of-state vigilantes spoiling for a fight with the federal government in January 2016? Patriots and 3 Percenters, showing up with their guns at a bird reserve? One of their leaders, LaVoy Finicum, even committed "suicide by cop" during a standoff with the FBI and our state troopers. Apparently the Oregon Republican Party is loving the marriage of the two gangs!

The prompting of these right-wing militants to action may have come from one of Baertschiger's Gang, state Sen. Brian Boquist. When he was told while in hiding last week that Gov. Kate Brown had ordered our state troopers to find the recalcitrant senators and return them to Salem to do their damn job, Brian responded with a threat. He said the governor better send Oregon state troopers who are "bachelors" and "heavily armed."

You think that's just the usual abnormal political rhetoric from some conservative right-wing loudmouth politician yahoo? Think again: Boquist is a Tillamook dairy farmer's son, an Eagle Scout who enlisted in the Army after high school and ended up as a decorated career special forces lieutenant colonel.

After he left the Army, he earned an MBA from Oregon State University and worked for a black-ops independent military contractor (Africa, Middle East, you name it). But when he ran for office in Oregon, he listed himself as a small

business owner with agricultural and forestry interests. He's worth an internet search, believe me, and he's totally supported by the mainstream Republican lobby.

Boquist ran for the U.S. Senate in the 1996 Republican primary and garnered 1 percent of the vote! Not quite mainstream. He ran in 2000 and 2002 against former U.S. Rep. Darlene Hooley, Dist. 5, and lost both times in almost a landslide — he averaged 44 percent of the vote in that congressional district.

Ultimately he succeeded Lane Shetterly in a Tea Party primary for an Oregon House seat and ended up in the Oregon Senate a few years later.

Boquist is considered by his colleagues on both sides of the aisle to be a complex guy; a bright guy, a motivated guy and a lone-wolf right-wing conspiracy guy. He prides himself on his black-ops background; smartest guy in the room. You get the picture. So enough about Brian Boquist. I'm just sayin'. You gotta consider the source of any threat.

But it gets worse. Now a GoFundMe page, "Encourage the Walking Senators," has been created by an anonymous funder. We're back into the discussion of "dark money" — undisclosed independent expenditure campaigns — in Oregon. By Sunday morning, June 23, they raised \$38,399 toward a \$49,500 goal. Former Republican gubernatorial candidate, state Rep. Knute Buehler, publicly announced he was donating \$5,000.

There are questions, obviously, about legislators taking money from an individual who allows anonymous donations.

Where are the Republican Party of Oregon leaders on this issue? Why are they not objecting to this unholy alliance?

Instead they send out a tweet that gets reported by *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* showing an unrelated phony protest before the Republicans walked out that looked fairly peaceful (except for the signs) and accused Senate Democrats of being cowards for not facing the crowd. You should read the tweets from Howard Dean and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. Pretty right on.

Republican senators weren't even in the friggin' state at the time of their cute tweet! I respect Boquist and I respect war heroes. I don't respect militancy as a last resort in Oregon politics.

Like we always say here at home: If you don't like the weather, wait a few minutes. Stay tuned. ■

Tony Corcoran of Cottage Grove is former state senator and a retired state employee.

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