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letters

THE BEST JUSTICE MONEY CAN BUY

I am very dismayed that Claire Syrett felt forced to drop her lawsuit (David Fidanque's Viewpoint, "After the Recall," 9/29).

I am very familiar with these legal tactics that allow people with money to so greatly raise the risks of pursuing matters of principle that even someone who is willing to risk a great deal cannot seek a day in court. Effectively, this means that money wins. If one has enough money, one can do anything they want to our elections and other civil processes and buy not only the outcome, but also buy their way out of responsibility for their actions.

I do not live in town, but the integrity of elections, including recalls, should be of concern to every citizen. Next time it could be in my community. It might even be perpetrated by the same people. Normally, I would be very cautious about drawing conclusions on such matters, but the evidence that something is not right about what happened in the Syrett recall is quite objective and publicly available.

If the conduct in the recall was just, let it be judged in court.

Perhaps the ACLU should look at the case? After all, what is more a matter of civil liberty than the integrity of elections?

Steven Berkson
Veneta

SYRETT RECALLED BY A SLIVER OF THE ELECTORATE

The official returns for the Ward 7 recall election have been posted, and 71 percent of registered voters in the ward did not cast a ballot. Claire Syrett was recalled by only 17 percent of eligible voters.

Democracy only works when the electorate is actively engaged. If you abstain from voting, you are relinquishing the decision to a small group of voters. Special elections, like this recall, tend to have low turnout, and that turnout con-

sists mostly of those behind the petition for the election and others whom they have riled up during their petition drive.

In this era of Trumpism and the Jan. 6 Commission that underscores the fragility of democracy, I thought more voters would have taken this election seriously.

I believe a recall should be the tactic of last resort, used only when egregious actions deem an officeholder unfit for office. Instead, we appear to have a group of zealots with an off-with-her-head mindset over one issue, which is a huge, multi-year project on which no major decisions have yet been made.

This whole affair has a bad smell to it, and we lost a good Eugene City Council member.

James Stauffer
Eugene, Ward 7

REAL DIVERSITY IN CITY GOVERNMENT

Now that Eugene City Council will be selecting a replacement for Clair Syrett, maybe they could honor diversity and bring some equity into City Hall. Someone who favors smaller government and lower taxes would be about as diverse as it gets around there.

Don Richey
Eugene

Editor's note: Since Eugene still doesn't have a city hall but instead the council meets in the downtown Lane Community College building, we know you meant a metaphoric rather than physical city hall.

MONEY COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER SPENT

Since the encampment at Washington Jefferson Park was removed on March 16, the park has been closed. The city of Eugene has estimated the renovation cost to be \$810,000 or more. I can't make sense of why this is so expensive. In my opinion that money could have been better put to use by providing services to our homeless, rather than kicking them out into our community.



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