

Opinion

HB 2797: The definition of insanity

One of the many bills under consideration in the Oregon Legislature this year would erect a giant barrier to seeking help when a drug overdose occurs, and more dishearteningly, it is a backslide into anti-drug policy proven not to work.

Oregon House Bill 2797 would establish a mandatory minimum prison sentence of four to 10 years—and a maximum of 20 years—for anyone who manufactures or delivers illegal drugs that result in an overdose and death.

Passage of this bill could result in more Oregon residents in prison for the crime of attempting to save a life. In one potential scenario, let's assume that one user gives drugs to another to help them "get better" while suffering through withdrawal. If the second user overdoses and the first one calls 9-1-1 for help, the caller could get up to 20 years in prison for supplying them the drugs that allowed the friend to overdose.

Proponents of the measure contend it would only be deployed to put high-level dealers and suppliers behind bars. However, passage would give prosecutors the opportunity to pursue charges against anyone regardless of lawmakers' intent.

Any further consideration of this legislation would be a colossal act of folly. The United States already holds the record for the highest rates of incarceration in the world, and paying for a new wave of inmates as a result of HB 2797 will only increase the burden on the existing penal system while siphoning off funding from other projects.

The existence of mandatory minimum sentences do little to reduce crime. Reforms aimed at eliminating these penalties in 33 states are expected to save billions of dollars in the long term, according to a study by the U.S. Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Assistance and The Pew Charitable Trusts along with other organizations. Moreover,

states that have reformed mandatory minimum laws reduced the strain on correctional facilities and overall crime rates continued a long-term decline with the reforms in place.

The hard truth is that drug suppliers are not the problem. If someone in Oregon wants to use drugs, someone else will find a way to meet the demand. Instead of spending more money chasing boogeyman drug dealers and then locking them up for years at a time, the money spent prosecuting such cases and incarcerating the guilty would be better utilized in treatment programs and alleviating the socioeconomic and societal pressures that contribute to drug use. As a community, a state and a nation we have to accept that punishing an addict is not the same as caring for one. Only the second path leads to healing.

HB 2797 is another in a long line of failed mandatory sentencing policies and laws. Trying to achieve different results with the same tool only serves to add more credence to the old axiom regarding the definition of insanity.

editorial

There was no collusion Rep. Schiff

By DEBRA J. SAUNDERS

President Donald Trump called on House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff to resign from Congress. That, of course, is not going to happen.

Even after special counsel Robert Mueller found no conspiracy or coordination between Trump's 2016 campaign and Russian actors, Schiff told The Washington Post, "Undoubtedly, there is collusion."

That establishes Schiff as a fact-don't-matter chairman who makes fellow Democrats seem immune to reality. But that's their right, and Schiff did win his Southern California district with 78 percent of the vote.

So instead of resigning, Schiff shrewdly started fundraising and campaigning on the heels of Trump's demand. "Adam won't be intimidated," a campaign tweet said, "Show Adam you have his back: add

your name now."

Last week, all nine Republicans on the committee called on Schiff to resign his chairmanship because he continued to argue there is evidence of collusion between Team Trump and the Russians. As House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called GOP members "scaredy cats," Schiff doubled down on his collusion claim, with sound bites about his high standards that soar above the low-ball behavior of the Trump campaign and Republicans who defend the Trump team.

"You may think it's OK how Trump and his associates interacted with Russians during the campaign," Schiff said to his colleagues. "I don't. I think it's immoral. I think it's unethical. I think it's unpatriotic. And yes, I think it's corrupt."

When interacting becomes synonymous with colluding, you're in guilt-by-association territory. And that's worse than having a pencil

neck.

Trump ignores the truth when he says Mueller absolved him of obstruction of justice, when Mueller expressly did not.

Schiff ignores the truth when he finds guilt where the dogged Mueller, after 22 months, issuing more than 2,800 subpoenas and interviewing some 500 witnesses, found none.

Attorney General William Barr reported to Congress that Mueller "did not find that any U.S. person or Trump campaign official or associate conspired or knowingly coordinated with the IRA (Russian Internet Research Agency) in its efforts."

Did Trump associates talk to Russians? Yes. Did they collude with Russians to win in 2016? No.

They can keep holding hearings trying to find collusion, but it's not going to happen. Trump won, and if they want to get to the truth, maybe they should ask American voters what happened.

(Creators Syndicate)

other voices

gene h. mcintyre

Turkey's president is a case study

History shows that when revolutions occurred in human civilizations—recent and ancient—a huge number of people involved believed the outcomes would advantage them. However, the specifics in many examples reveal that, after peace returned, one man, sometimes a woman, established a stranglehold that resulted, save for a few confidants, in widespread loss of rights and freedoms.

The creation of the United States has been an exception where, otherwise, the last 100 years, when strongmen led revolutions, afterwards they demanded absolute allegiance and unquestioning loyalty by one and all. What became the U.S. Constitution has worked well enough to survive breakdowns, although former President Richard M. Nixon tried to overthrow it while current President Donald J. Trump is apparently busy trying to subvert and emasculate it.

Turkey provides a case study. In 2014, its authoritarian President Recep Tayyip Erdogan fired four prosecutors leading an investigation

into alleged corruption involving Erdogan, whereupon he blatantly interfered, demanding the scandal disappear. It was within his authority to do so but his action resulted in widespread protests based on rule by law in Turkey. Erdogan claimed a conspiracy, threatened his opponents, and dismissed the charges.

A mere two years ago, in the firing of FBI Director James Comey, we observed a parallel. In ousting the man leading the FBI's investigation into Trump's alleged collusion with Russia, he has behaved monocratically. While "no one" has seen the Mueller probe, Trump has declared "no collusion." Yet, his direct associates have been indicted and convicted while accompanied by the "funny business" of Trump family members. Meanwhile, he's after our constitutionally-established free press, other political parties and anyone who questions him, all having become "enemies of the people."

Trump is damaging America's democracy as he pushes hard against

its limits. Things damaged will endure beyond his presidency and will predictably be difficult to repair. Trump's abuses of power and his assault on truth are now heightened to extreme levels while the behavior of newly appointed U.S. Attorney General William Barr leads one to believe he's a Trump employee and Trump's latest private "fixer." Meanwhile, for re-election's sake, Republican members of Congress are breaking their oaths of office by surrendering to Trump rules, launching a new America where one man governs alone and GOPers obey.

All along, Trump has used a "smoking gun" on behalf of saving himself, breaking federal law and tradition. His behavior has pervasively resembled a lawyer giving his closing arguments only to have the defendant rise to say, "Actually, I did it. And when you're a star, they'll let you do it."

Daily press briefings inside the White House have ended, replaced by Trump talking to reporters while walking to the White House helicopter. When questions irritate him, a regular feature, he signals the props to spin noisily, drowning out further dialogue. The transparent government of past times is moribund. FOX News is Trump's exclusive source of information and his official news agency while he works to close down other news outlets.

Americans who continue to support and believe in Donald Trump are encouraged to read the 1930s Germany story where millions believed Adolph Hitler's promise of a glorious future in his Third Reich. Hitler's thinly-disguised plans for one-man rule were duplicated by Italy's Benito Mussolini, China's Mao Zedong, USSR's Joe Stalin, France's Napoleon Bonaparte, and Spain's Francisco Franco, to name but five former dictators whose nations were destroyed under their rule.

(Gene H. McIntyre shares his opinion regularly in the *Keizertimes*.)

Correction

Brittany Ruiz, author of the guest opinion, *Measles panic or Pharma marketing?* in the March 22 issue of the *Keizertimes* is not an administrator with Oregonians for Medical Freedoms. We regret the error.

Birthday Expo at Kroc Center April 13

Honey Mustard Lane, a local business, will host the Salem Birthday Expo. The event will debut at the Kroc Center 1865 Bill Frey Drive on Saturday, April 13 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Expo will host over 50 birthday vendors including local shops such as Pink Mama's Ice Cream, My Pink Princess Cakes, Piñata Palace, and more.

Visitors to this family event will learn how to throw great Pinterest-worthy parties or have a chance of getting the kids out of the house.

Nikki Paxton, the event coordinator and owner of Honey Mustard Lane, said "This will be a great way to kick off the spring."

The event is free to attend and birthday themed food will be available for purchase. The first 50 families will receive a goodie bag, and there will be



drawings held for prizes every hour. There will also be expo shows featuring local dancing, gymnastics and karate clubs.

traffic court

NO INSURANCE

Casey Joe Fields, \$265; Alexis Nicole Todd, \$245; Jonathan James Childers, \$265; Javier Hernandez Sanchez, \$235.

NO PROOF OF INSURANCE

Irma Salinas Guerrero, \$235; Christy Ann Hernandez, \$245.

DRIVING WHILE SUSPENDED

Casey Joe Fields, \$492; Martin Eugene Simons, \$260; Jason Scott Dubois, \$260; Alexis Nicole Todd, \$452; Jayleen Ann Stewart, \$440; Jonathan James Childers, \$440; Christian Cervantes, \$440.

USE OF MOBILE DEVICE

Craig Allen Turner, \$235; Jeremy Joseph Centeno, \$235; Nicole Rennee Piete, \$235.

SPEEDING

Jennifer Elaine Carmack, \$145; Jared Duenas, \$75; Dominic Zenaido Meza Cervantes, \$135; Kyle Mason Connery, \$135; Mark Andrey Brichuk, \$145; Nicholas Patrick Watkins, \$135; Alexis Nicole Todd,

\$135; Juleah Adaline Groves, \$100; Jay Kendrick Burch, \$135; Lillian Anna Laetsvvh, \$75; Ishmael Delapp Johnson, \$75.

OTHER

Rick Thomas Phillips, \$100, no motorcycle lights; Caitlin Elanie Blair, \$100, wrong way around traffic island; Kaitlynn Anne Watts, \$40, improper display of validating stickers; Amy Noel Bauldree, \$135, fail to yield right of way within roundabout; Angel Miguel Silverio Navarro Jr., \$40, failure to renew vehicle registration; Christopher Campbell Cary, \$40, failure to register vehicle; Alexis Gutierrez, \$115, failure to use seat belts; Debra Jean Means, \$40, failure to renew vehicle registration; Christy Ann Hernandez, \$115, failure to renew vehicle registration; Titus Daniel Meaders, \$40, illegal window tinting; Melva Pearl Pollock, \$40, failure to renew vehicle registration; Mark Stuart Binkley, \$40, failure to renew vehicle registration; Judah David Banke, \$40, failure to renew vehicle registration; Samuel Tyrel Williams, \$115, failure to use seat belts.

GRASSROOTS GOVERNMENT



The Keizer Long Range Planning Task Force, a group that will be the city's official budget committee, met Monday, March 11, to discuss what's on deck regarding the city budget. A recording of the meeting was unavailable due to technical problems at the city, what follows is based on a draft of the meeting minutes.

- Stormwater – Videotaping of the system inherited from Marion County is approximately 80 percent complete. Once finished, a new master planning effort will be launched. A .55 cent increase to water bills is planned and will take effect Jan. 1, 2020.
 - Water – The city is planning a 4 percent increase to water bills, which will amount to about one-third of a cent per gallon for city residents, the cheapest around according to Keizer Finance Director Tim Wood.
 - General Fund – Funds in the city's account that pays for most personnel remains stable with an expected savings of about \$300,000 throughout the year to keep it stable. The city continues to investigate alternate revenue streams like leasing city-owned property.
 - Park services fee – The first year of fee collection for parks services has been stronger than anticipated. The effects of the fee can be seen throughout the city's park system in the form of better maintenance and replacement of end-of-life amenities.
 - Police services fee – Receipts on the police services fee are also stronger than anticipated and five new officers have been added to the Keizer Police Department. With no dramatic changes the city will need to consider increasing the fee or reduce the number of officers in the 2022-23 budget year.
- The Keizer Budget Committee will meet April 30 and May 2 and 9 to hammer out all the details of the 2019-20 fiscal year. Meetings are held at the Keizer Civic Center at 6 p.m.

Pentacle Theatre to stage *Yellow*

Pentacle Theatre will be present the musical, *Yellow* by Del Shores starting on Friday, April 12 at Pentacle Theatre 324 52nd Ave. NW. The show will continue through May 4.

Yellow is a musical that explores the themes of cowardice, intolerance, family secrets and forgiveness. The musical will also feature the music of the Salem band, True North.

This comedic drama contains

profanities, sexual references, religious epithets, derogatory terms and a depiction of family violence and may not be suitable for children.

Showtimes are on Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and on Sundays at 2 p.m.

Ticket prices vary and can be purchased at pentacletheatre.org, or at the Pentacle Theatre Ticket Office at 145 Liberty Street NE, Suite 102.

Athletic boosters to host informational meeting

The McNary Athletic Booster Club meeting will host an informational meeting on Monday, April 15, for anyone in our community that would like to attend.

There will be a PowerPoint presentation that will go over what the

booster club does and how people can get involved.

There will also be refreshments available.

The meeting will take place the College and Career Center at McNary High School at 6 p.m.

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