

A muted response to a shot

Editorial

The Keizer City Council voted unanimously to release the investigative report on the former city manager's discharge of gun in his office in early March. This after the city denied requests for access to the full report from the *Keizertimes*.

The report has since been posted on the city's website as well as in the media. Upon reading, it is not difficult to understand why the city didn't want to release it. The city's initial denial for the report's release was based on personal privacy and due process issues. Some city officials are shown in less than flattering light.

What is striking is that the reaction from those in city hall at the time was so muted. A gun shot in an office in this time in our country should unnerve anyone. Shannon Johnson, the city attorney—whose office is near the city manager's office—heard the shot. According to the report he went to the city manager's office, who told him, "It's okay, it's okay." In the report Johnson told the investigator, "...I just left. I didn't ask any questions, I just left."

A number of people heard the bang—though not all thought it was a gunshot. According to the city manager's statement, he went to staff in the area around his office and apologized for the discharge of the gun.

A gunshot in any public building is unnerving, especially in light of the large number of recent mass shooting

incidents across the United States. The public should question why the Keizer Police Department was not immediately informed of the gun discharge. Police Chief John Teague told the investigator he was unaware of the gun discharge until asked for a response from the *Keizertimes*.

In a subsequent investigation the Oregon State Patrol concluded that the city manager's discharge of his personal gun was not a crime. That may be, but the city has workplace violence policies prohibiting anyone other than police officers from carrying firearms in the building without permission. There is no evidence any such permission was given to the city manager.

Reaction from the public included surprise and shock. There were calls for forgiveness. Would the reaction be different if it was, for example, a teacher, who had brought a firearm into school and it accidentally discharged? We think not.

We hope this was an isolated incident. It was unfortunate and it cost the city manager his job after a celebrated two-decade career with the City of Keizer. He has since been hired to work in community development for Marion County. The incident of March 4 demonstrates how easily a firearm can be brought into a public building. We have not reached the point where metal detectors are needed and hopefully never will. We must rely on those entering our governmental and education buildings to adhere to the laws and statutes designed to keep people safe.

A gun was fired in Keizer City Hall. The reaction was lackluster. The city council and city officials should be more forthcoming in explaining why.

—LAZ

Get off the internet

To the Editor:

The best way to prevent hacks and/or ransom ware attacks is to get your system(s) off of the internet. You don't have to be completely free of the internet but for sure; utilities, governments, hospitals, schools, etc. should isolate their critical data bases and operations from the internet.

The internet is convenient for many uses but critical operations and data base management should not be connected to the internet. If you are not on the internet, your system can't be held for ransom or damaged by malicious hacks. Convenience has to be balanced with security and privacy needs and convenience should not be the first choice.

Jim Parr
Keizer

The cost of climate change

To the Editor:

Rep. Bill Post again shows his inability to understand that climate change is already costing Keizer taxpayers money.

In the May 7 *Keizertimes* article (*Post's bill for police dog rescue, veteran's benefits taking shape*), Post says of the 2020 Republican walkout of the legislature's cap-and-trade regulations "We walked out because cap and trade would have fundamentally changed the economy of Oregon forever...."

As if last summer's wildfires, augmented

by climate change, had no effect on Oregon's economy. Clearly that's false. As if more warming, drought and wildfires are not in our future. As if Keizer taxpayers are not already paying part of Miami's sea level rise protection costs, or, soon, Key West, and others on the east coast. As if we're not already paying higher food prices for the scientifically documented agricultural losses due to climate change.

I've found this in my own correspondence with Post—he fails to understand that climate change itself has costs—apparently he can only see the costs of its mitigation. We need smarter, wiser more engaged representation in our state legislation.

David Appell
Keizer

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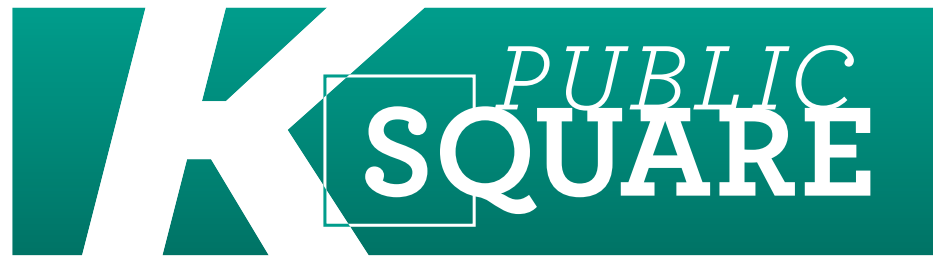
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Democrats are thwarting recovery

By MARC A. THIESSEN

President Joe Biden insists that last week's disastrous jobs report has nothing to do with Democrats' extension of federal unemployment benefits. "I know there's been a lot of discussion . . . that people are being paid to stay home, rather than go to work," he said Monday. "Well, we don't see much evidence of that."

Look harder, Mr. President. The evidence is there for all to see.

The April jobs report fell short of expectations by more than 700,000 jobs. Normally, that would be a sign that employers are reluctant to hire. But that is not the case today. Job openings are at a record high. Employers are creating millions of jobs; they just can't find workers to fill them.

How can that be? With coronavirus restrictions being lifted across the country, and vaccines available to anyone who wants them, Americans are venturing out, traveling, going to restaurants and living their lives again. Millions of Americans who were forced out of their jobs during the pandemic should be eager to return to work.

So why aren't they? One reason is that by extending the federal unemployment supplement to September, Biden created a disincentive for millions of Americans to return to work. Even though Congress reduced the federal supplement from \$600 to \$300 a week, a recent paper estimates that 48% of workers still make more from unemployment benefits than they would from working.

This is especially true for those at the lower end of the income scale, such as restaurant workers. In an interview with a restaurant industry journal, Carl Howard, chief executive of the Fazoli's restaurant chain, does the math. "In Ohio you can make \$452 a week in unemployment," he says. "The federal government is going to top that with \$300. That's \$752 [a week]. If I pay \$15 an hour, that's \$600." In other words, even if he matches what Democrats say should be the federal minimum wage, he can't compete with the unemployment office.

But that's not all. While workers would have to pay taxes on that \$600 in earned income, thanks to Biden they can get some of that \$752 tax-free -- because the president's covid-19 relief legislation included a \$10,200 tax exemption for individuals on unemployment, and \$20,400 for married joint filers. Why would someone work long hours to earn \$600 a week when they make more and pay less in taxes by doing nothing?

Is enhanced unemployment the only reason Americans are not filling the record number of job openings? Of course not. Another problem is Biden's failure to push back on his allies, the teachers unions, and get U.S. schools reopened. According to

the American Enterprise Institute's "Return 2 Learn" tracker, less than half of all public schools are currently open for full-time in-person learning—and the numbers are even lower in school districts with high minority populations and high proportions of single mothers.

This is not only harming millions of



American children; it also is preventing millions of American moms from rejoining the workforce. According to a Pew analysis, mothers of small children lost work at three times the rate of fathers during the pandemic -- and job losses were even higher for single mothers of young children. If Biden wants to help these families, he should demand that the teachers unions agree to reopen our nation's public schools -- not next fall, but for summer learning, so that kids can make up lost ground and mothers can return to work.

As the Biden administration fails, Republican governors across the country are showing the way forward. In January, Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds signed a law that requires every public and accredited private school in her state to offer in-person learning, five days a week. Governors in Arizona, Texas, Florida, West Virginia, South Carolina and other states also have directed schools to reopen. As a result, across the country, 59% of schools are fully reopened in districts that Donald Trump won compared with just 32% in districts won by Biden.

Similarly, Republican governors in South Carolina, Arkansas and Montana have announced that they are turning down the federal unemployment subsidies in their states starting at the end of June. In Montana, Gov. Greg Gianforte is going a step further by offering a one-time \$1,200 "return to work" bonus to anyone who returns to work and completes at least four full weeks of paid employment. My American Enterprise Institute colleague Michael R. Strain suggests we should do the same on the federal level.

Early in the pandemic, when millions of businesses were ordered to close by the government, it made sense to give unemployed Americans additional help to make it through the lockdowns. But that is no longer the case. America is back open for business -- or at least it would be if the Democrats' policies weren't holding it back.

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PUBLISHER & EDITOR

Lyndon Zaitz
publisher@keizertimes.com

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