

THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



DAVID F. PERO, Publisher & Editor

JIM VAN NOSTRAND, Managing Editor

JEREMY FELDMAN, Circulation Manager

DEBRA BLOOM, Business Manager

JOHN D. BRUIJN, Production Manager

CARL EARL, Systems Manager

OUR VIEW

Congress should do its job and protect Dreamers

Last week, Donald Trump rescinded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, an Obama-era policy that gave short-term relief to about 800,000 residents who illegally entered the United States as children.

Nicknamed “Dreamers,” those young people temporarily protected by DACA are among the most widely supported groups of illegal immigrants in the country. According to most recent surveys, 75 percent to 80 percent of Americans approve of keeping them in the U.S., either via some sort of avenue to citizenship or under special government protection from deportation. After all, these are children who arrived here without really having a choice, have known no other home and have committed no crimes while in this country.

Still, there are immigration hardliners who won’t budge, and those 20 percent to 25 percent of Americans and their representatives have stopped any meaningful immigration reform from being enacted, even on a layup like the Dreamers.

For decades our national legislative bodies have failed in their duties. In order to protect their own hides from that vocal minority, members of those bodies have disregarded the will of a large majority of Americans. And in covering their own behinds, those congressmen are hanging Americans — and should-be Americans — out to dry.

This country has long needed comprehensive immigration reform, but Congress hasn’t got it done. This country has long needed massive infrastructure investment, but Congress hasn’t got it done. This country has long needed comprehensive tax reform, but don’t hold your breath.

This puts presidents in a poor position. Being a constitutional law scholar, Barack Obama admitted that his DACA program was on shaky legal ground from the beginning. He made no bones about that, but felt he had no other choice because Congress had abdicated its duties by doing nothing and leaving a critical problem festering and unresolved.

President Trump asserted last week that DACA was sure to be challenged in court — and it would likely fall. Perhaps he is right. But the announcement of his decision was nearly universally panned by congressmen both Republican and Democratic. Yet how hypocritical of them. They are the people who can solve this mess, yet they choose to criticize rather than create.

A wide majority of Americans want to protect Dreamers. Congress should do its job and create a reasonable, legal system for doing so. Then get on to the next problem on the list.

Military spouses also serve our country

Today’s edition of Coast Weekend includes a story about a new book highlighting military spouses.

“Behind the Scenes: Tales of Military Spouses Making a Difference” includes a segment on Stacey Benson, a skilled photographer and graphic designer who moved to Astoria this summer.

Her husband, a former special forces soldier, is a law enforcement specialist who has just been assigned to the Coast Guard cutter Steadfast, which is homeported here.

Our culture has evolved to the point where people of all political stripes find common ground acknowledging the contribution of the outstanding men and women who serve in our Armed Forces.

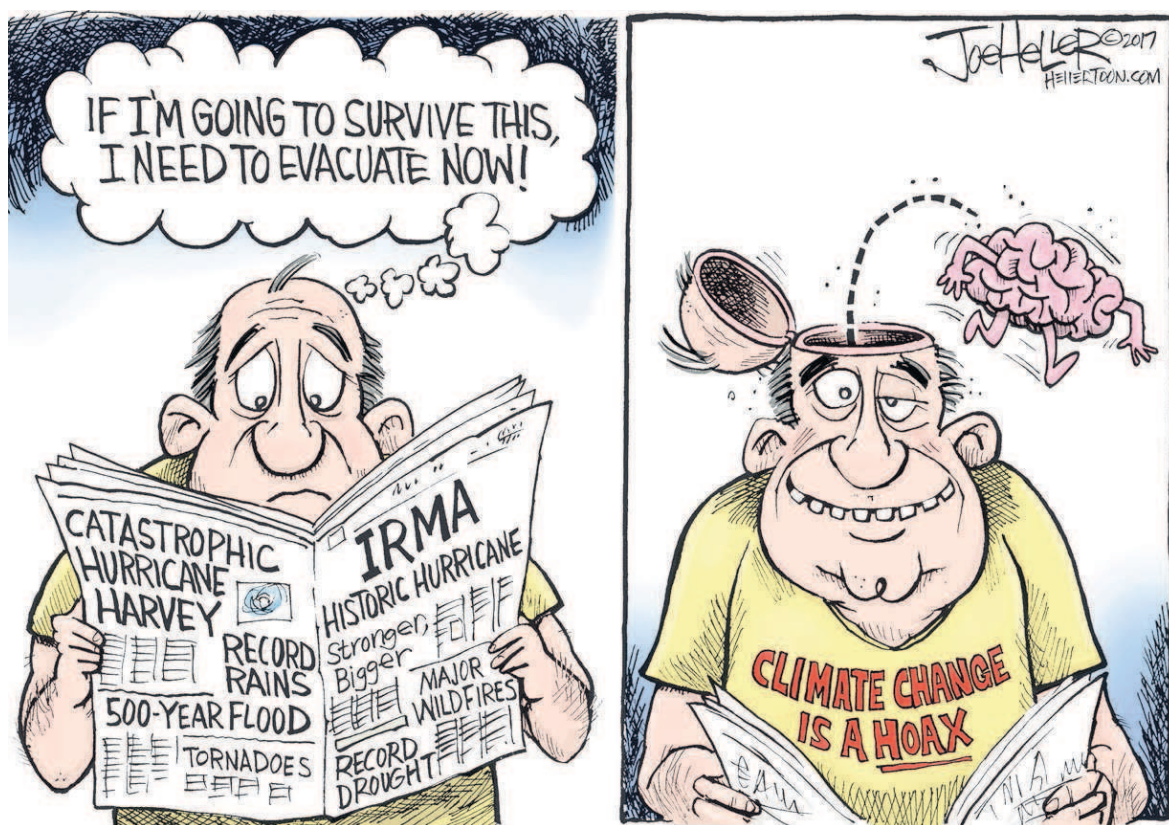
But these brave people would not be able to serve their country with confidence without the support of their families who keep the home fires burning while they are away on their missions.

However, Benson and the others featured in the book aren’t content to just do that. They make a difference advocating for veterans, helping other spouses and serving in key capacities in their communities. Benson, for example, works for the Semper Fi Fund, a registered charity that aids injured veterans in their transition to civilian life.

Astoria takes great pride in being a Coast Guard city. Having dedicated, well-trained professionals to protect mariners on our perilous coast with daily acts of valor is something we all appreciate. And having the service here on the North Coast has enriched our community with leadership for decades.

But along with these men and women in uniform come their spouses and their families. Mindful of the positive example that Benson and others in the book offer us, we are delighted to offer all service spouses our grateful thanks.

They serve our country, too.



GUEST COLUMN

Shape plans to cut carbon emissions for coastal communities

By MIKE CASSINELLI and BRAD WARREN

Special to The Daily Astorian

Abundant fisheries are Ilwaco’s lifeblood, so I take an interest in reducing the carbon emissions that undercut the ocean’s ability to produce seafood. I own a charter fishing operation and currently serve as mayor of Ilwaco.

Why do I care? Overheated river water killed half the sockeye salmon returning to the Columbia River in 2015. That year a warm-water “blob” in the ocean helped fuel an algae bloom that fouled some of our main fisheries with a neurotoxin called domoic acid. It caused job-destroying closures of Dungeness crab fishing. It shut the razor clam harvest that draws hundreds of thousands of visitors to Washington’s coast.

The risks and damages just keep mounting. Ilwaco’s biggest private employer is a fish plant that relies on city water from a forested watershed. Logging and climate change could destabilize our water supply.

A citizens’ initiative is being drafted that could help Washingtonians prosper and cut carbon pollution. The measure needs improvement to reduce emissions enough and to fit rural realities. But the proposition wending toward ballots in 2018 stands a decent chance of passing.

The Alliance for Jobs and Clean Energy proposal would raise about \$1.2 billion a year initially and reinvest the money to reduce pollution, ease climate impacts, and mitigate inequitable impacts of carbon pricing. A few percent of revenues are reserved to aid workers who could lose their jobs if big polluters close shop and energy-intensive businesses costs rise. Administrative expenses are capped at 5 percent. For the balance, the Alliance promises 70 percent for clean energy and 30 percent for water and forest projects.

Carbon revenues might help us protect Ilwaco’s water supply. They could help build an efficient cold storage, saving the cost and emissions from trucking our tuna all the way to Bellingham and back. With some adjustments, this plan has potential. Suggestions:

- **Achieve Washington’s greenhouse gas targets.** An initial model forecast indicates that the Alliance plan (as previewed in 2017’s H.R. 1646) would fall short of state emission targets. Why shoot to miss? Recommendation: Model emissions outcomes and adjust the proposed investment priorities (and complementary rules) until the plan can deliver.

- **Keep costs low.** The proposed starting price of \$15 per metric ton of carbon dioxide (13.5

cents/gallon of gas) could fund transformative investments in a cleaner economy. But the Alliance has proposed to raise the tax as much as 7 percent annually whenever emissions exceed goals. Other states are achieving — and beating — emissions targets with low carbon prices. Why not Washington? Recommendations: Limit the tax to \$15 for at least five years. Cap later price hikes at the rate of local wage increases by county.

• Protect rural communities.

Because we lack Seattle’s density, wealth and infrastructure, some criteria in the Alliance proposal could exclude us. Recommendations: Make sure carbon revenues help rural people drive down our fuel bills. Reserve 25 percent of carbon revenues for rural areas. Allow rural projects that use fossil fuels if they reduce emissions. Wherever labor standards govern investments, use average local wages by county.

• Fund projects to improve fuel efficiency in both vehicles and commercial marine vessels.

Transportation produces nearly half of Washington’s carbon emissions. We need investment guidelines that make improvements affordable, not unattainable. Recommendations: Use simple, cheap “input and output” measures to confirm emission reductions in transport (instead of picking winners by defining “verified” technologies). Fuel purchase records, fuel flow meters and biannual emission tests might work.

- **Don’t isolate Washington.** The Alliance has proposed to prohibit investments to reduce any emissions that occur outside the state. This disadvantage residents who buy fuel at home but burn much of it out of state (including fishermen). It will also impair efforts to link arms across borders to meet this big, shared challenge. Recommendations: Explicitly permit investments that reduce emissions from vessels or vehicles owned by Washington individuals or entities, regardless of whether those emissions occur within the state.

These are just a few ideas to refine the Alliance’s plan to work for fishery-dependent communities like ours. The Alliance has made a decent start tackling a problem that matters to all of us, but they have their own priorities. Now it’s up to the rest of us to help shape that plan into a solution we can support (and live with). Time is short. Probably by the end of October, the window will close to adjust initiative language. How to get involved? Join the Working Group on Seafood and Energy, which helped me learn enough to speak up.

Mike Cassinelli is the mayor of Ilwaco, Washington. Brad Warren is senior adviser to the Working Group on Seafood and Energy, a trade organization representing the seafood industry, coastal communities and fishery-dependent tribes.



Mike Cassinelli



Brad Warren

EO Media Group/File Photo

Jessie’s Ilwaco Fish Co. is a major processor of Dungeness crab.

