

OPINION

theAstorian

editor@dailyastorian.com

Founded in 1873

KARI BORGES
Publisher

JIM VAN NOSTRAND
Editor

JEREMY FELDMAN
Circulation Manager

JOHN D. BRUIJN
Production Manager

CARL EARL
Systems Manager

OUR VIEW

Time will tell if GOP strategy pays off

Oregon voters watched Monday as political drama took center stage in Salem when Republican members of the Senate returned after a weeklong walkout.

The result was the passage of the Student Success Act, a multi-tiered piece of legislation that will funnel money into schools but boost taxes. Gov. Kate Brown is expected to sign it into law.

Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, voted for the bill, which passed 18-11 on party lines. But her vote in support is conditional upon the Legislature adopting major reforms to the state’s public pension system this year, she said.

Two other controversial bills — each opposed by Republicans — evaporated, seemingly part of the deal to bring Senate GOP members back to the Capitol.

Voters, though, should remember that the Senate GOP walkout was never about funding education. Republicans have consistently stated on the record that they support giving more money to Oregon’s schools.

No, the walkout was a move of desperation, prompted by the lack



AP Photo/Connor Radnovich

A sign reading ‘Real PERS Reform Now’ lies on the empty desk of a Republican senator after they didn’t show up for Senate floor session in Salem last week. Democrats unveiled a plan to rein in the state’s rising pension costs in an attempt to coax protesting Republicans back to the Capitol.

of urgency from Democrats to work with their GOP colleagues.

With a supermajority, Democrats hold supreme power in the Legislature. The sentiment seemed to be that if Republicans were not going to play political ball, then Democrats would just go ahead and greenlight their legislative priorities.

Except even with a supermajority the old fundamental of democracy — working along a bipartisan route to solve problems — reigns.

Even if it means Republicans walking away for a week.

In the end, GOP senators had little choice but to evacuate the capital and deprive Democrats of the

needed quorum to vote on the education bill.

Time will tell if the tactic pays off. Now, it appears to have been only marginally successful. Yes, Republican did gain some political traction — the vaccination and gun bills were dropped — and more funding for schools is now a reality.

Yet at least one major elephant — the cap and trade bill — is still standing on the Oregon political porch. House Bill 2020 is controversial in many parts of the state, and for good reason. GOP lawmakers have worked hard this session to put the brakes on the carbon emission legislation — if only to develop a better, more equitable plan in the future. So far, Democrats don’t appear to be listening. We hope that changes.

In the end, the walkout, while politically unseemly, ultimately did not impede additional funding for our local schools. No matter what one’s political persuasion, producing more money to educate our children is always a good idea.

And sometimes good ideas can be a rare species inside Oregon’s Capitol.

LETTERS

Port needs fresh air

There are two candidates who can bring fresh air to the Port of Astoria Commission if we simply elect them.

Robert “Steve” Stevens is a proven leader with terrific management skills, honed through a lifetime of training and vetted selection as a senior Coast Guard officer.

He is an excellent manager who not only knows how to create institutional opportunity, but also understands how vital it is to build a cooperative team by respecting both professional standards, and everyone involved, to ensure a productive climate for strategic visioning and problem solving.

Another candidate, Scott McClaine, is also willing to breathe fresh air into the Port Commission. Scott is a self-made man clearly committed to the high moral standard of serving others. Serving others for him was a calling as a medic, whose commitment earned him operational management responsibilities during his service in the Coast Guard.

It’s no surprise that service above self defines both of these candidates, as that focus is the Coast Guard’s sacred commitment. We are fortunate that Clatsop County is valued by the retired Coast Guard community, as many of these skilled and highly trained professionals not only retire here, but volunteer for the benefit of us all.

If ever our Port needs fresh air it is now, and these two are ready and willing to work hard to do the heavy lifting needed to make our Port a worthy asset of The Great River of the West.

JERRY OSTERMILLER
Astoria

Don’t ignore warning signs

May is Women’s Health Month. Did you know heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women? As a survivor of a heart attack in 2018, and becoming a Mayo Clinic trained WomenHeart Champion, I want every woman to be “heart smart.” That means learning the symptoms for heart attack.

Women fill many roles — mom, wife, grandma, caregiver, boss, employee, volunteer and all-around problem solver. Women are notorious for taking care of everybody and everything before taking care of themselves.

Women’s heart attack symptoms are not like men’s. Here’s Mayo Clinic’s list: Neck, jaw, shoulder, upper back or abdominal discomfort; shortness of breath; pain in one or both arms; nausea or vomiting; sweating; lightheadedness or dizziness; unusual fatigue.

I had all of these warning signs, and made excuses for each one, because I was too “busy” that day to go to the Emergency Room. I self-diagnosed my discomfort as an anxiety attack. Big mistake.

Thankfully, my cardiologist and hospital saved my life by getting me to the Cath Lab and putting in two stents. Always call



911 — it’s far better to have a false alarm than to die from a heart attack.

SUSAN SMITH
Seaside

MacDonald for transit board

I support Tracy MacDonald for Sunset Empire Transit District (SETD) Board, Position 1.

I am writing because I think Tracy didn’t tell you all the things you need to know. He is a very humble person by nature.

Tracy, a Marine (1969 to 1973), was sent to Santa Ana Community College for a transportation planning certificate in transportation planning and administration.

Tracy worked for our local employer, Medix, in medical transportation for 11 years before he retired last year.

Tracy has served for the last four years on the SETD board, so he is informed and ready to go.

Tracy supports the expansion of the Dial-A-Ride program for citizens of our county who have mobility issues that prevent use of the bus system. Also, the board he sits on is tackling scheduling needs for the bus system, improving service.

So, you have a candidate serving and contributing to the board, who has spent much of his life serving the community, who spent the last 11 years in the transportation field and who has had college education in transportation. Also, the board gets a trained emergency medical responder, if needed.

The board is doing a good job; it would be foolish to change the mix now. It makes no sense to try to fix something that is

working well. Please vote for Tracy MacDonald for Sunset Empire Transportation District Board, Position 1.

RICK NEWTON
Warrenton

Mazzarella for school board

As someone who was lucky enough to have the support and encouragement of others when running for the office of state representative myself last year, I think that it’s incredibly important to similarly offer support to an eminently qualified candidate for public office: Andrea Mazzarella, who is one of the two candidates running for Zone 2 Position 2 on the Clatsop Community College Board.

Mazzarella has, and continues to be, an incredible force in the community, especially in the area of higher education. She has been integral to conversations for the college’s acquisition of the Marine and Environmental Research and Training Station (MERTS) campus, which effectively expanded access for students to gain essential training in the maritime field. The maritime sector provides many high-paying jobs that allow for residents of the county to continue to live and contribute to the community.

Andrea also knows the life of a Clatsop Community College student herself, frequently enrolling in classes for personal enrichment. She knows how tuition increases impact students, and is committed to keeping the education at the college accessible to students from every walk of life.

I have nothing but complete confidence in Andrea’s ability to serve our community

and to put students first. She gets my vote, and I hope others also see the value in allowing Mazzarella another term to serve our students.

TIFFINY MITCHELL
Astoria

Oser for school board

Why am I running for reelection to the Astoria School District Board? Two reasons.

First, as a member of the board and as co-chairman of “Yes for Astoria Kids,” I was a key contributor to the successful school bond campaign last fall. Along with Superintendent Craig Hoppes, I spoke to dozens of groups about the needs of our school district. I organized get-out-the vote activities and raised funds for informational materials.

I have the necessary financial skills and experience to ensure that the bond proceeds will be spent on time and on budget. No other director, nor anyone else running for the board, possesses my expertise in budgeting, financial and risk management and accounting.

Second, as a director, I have worked hard to support the district’s mission of preparing each student to his or her fullest potential for a life of learning, citizenship and work. I support smaller class sizes, additional counseling positions, more pre-kindergarten classes and expanded career and technical education.

Help me achieve these goals by voting for David Oser for Position 2 on the Astoria School Board.

DAVID OSER
Astoria