

# OPINION



# the Astorian

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## GUEST COLUMN

# Cities are the lifeblood of the state

**W**e are in the midst of a crisis that's delivered a one-two punch.

The coronavirus pandemic is first and foremost a public health emergency, but also an economic crisis of epic proportions. How we handle this crisis on both fronts will be defining not only for the state of Oregon but also its 241 cities.

Cities are the lifeblood of the state and where about 80% of our 4.3 million residents live. Knowing that, it is important to consider that only one city in our state — Portland — received any direct federal aid. As the part of local government that provides essential services for more than 200

million residents across the country, including police, fire and sanitation, relief for all cities translates directly into quality of life for residents.

Cities, towns and villages nationwide are calling for \$500 billion in direct federal aid and economic relief over the next two years to support those communities that are on the front line of America's response to COVID-19, and in short, this money can save lives.

Since local governments are being charged with executing the COVID-19 response, that should mean all cities receive federal support to get through the



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Cities are struggling through the coronavirus pandemic.

crisis. Yet the first federal coronavirus legislation was passed in mid-March — and to date, there has been no direct aid provided to the majority of America's cities, towns and villages.

Consider, cities are the engine of the American economy. They create an environment where businesses can thrive

while allowing residents to earn a good living. Investing in local governments, therefore, has a stimulating effect on the entire American economy.

As it stands now, our cities here in Oregon are bracing for a 20% to 25% revenue reduction in the coming years. This may not be felt immediately because

cities are a lagging performance indicator of the economy in general. Make no mistake though: there are tough decisions ahead for Oregon's municipalities.

Local governments are not looking for a handout or a bailout. They are looking for partners at both the state and federal levels to help them reopen and recover. In the end, if local governments are not empowered to reopen and are not federally supported in recovery efforts, it will be a painfully long time before our country is truly back in business.

It is the duty and charge of the League of Oregon Cities to advocate for all of the states' 241 cities to preserve the quality of life we all expect and enjoy.

Right now, many cities statewide have dug deep and dedicated funds to prop up our sagging economy by working to support local business. The others are barely hanging on, and do not have the resources to finance a program to offer any aid to local business.

We can and need to do better, but that cannot happen without a strong, inclusive partnership on the state and federal levels. As we are trying to flatten the curve related to the health care side of this crisis, we need to have the same sense of urgency addressing the economic side, or the outlook for Oregon cities is, at best, uncertain.

*Jake Boone, who serves on the Cottage Grove City Council, is president of the League of Oregon Cities.*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Resource colony

It is as it has always been. "Big money bought the forests" (The Astorian, June 13) is a distraction. That Clatsop County is a resource colony isn't scandalous, and it's not even news. ATM forestry is the rule. There is no other reason for owning it all.

We love our billionaires. As long as money talks, and corporations are people, there will be no reform to forest practices in Oregon without Big Timber approval.

Congratulations to #TimberUnity and your newly minted Clatsop County commissioners. You pulled it off. The folly lies in your captivity.

GARY DURHEIM  
Seaside

### Act of love

He simply said, 'Please. Please, I need to live.' It was the please that caught my memory."

My daughters recently saw "The Princess Bride" for the first time. Those of us who know and love this story know that it is many things, including a story of love.

The film has many quotable lines. One making the meme rounds is, "They're terribly comfortable. I think everyone will be wearing them in the future." Westley is referring to his mask.

Maybe masks aren't "terribly comfortable," and to protect from COVID-19 they must cover our mouths and noses, as opposed to Westley's eye-covering, but wearing a mask is an act of love.

I wear a mask to protect you in case I am sick, which I may be without knowing. In the same way, you wear a mask to protect me and my daughters and our neighbors and, and, and ... Wearing a mask is a recognition that others' lives matter. It is an act of love.

Please. Wear a mask. Please.

REBECCA PIERCE  
Astoria

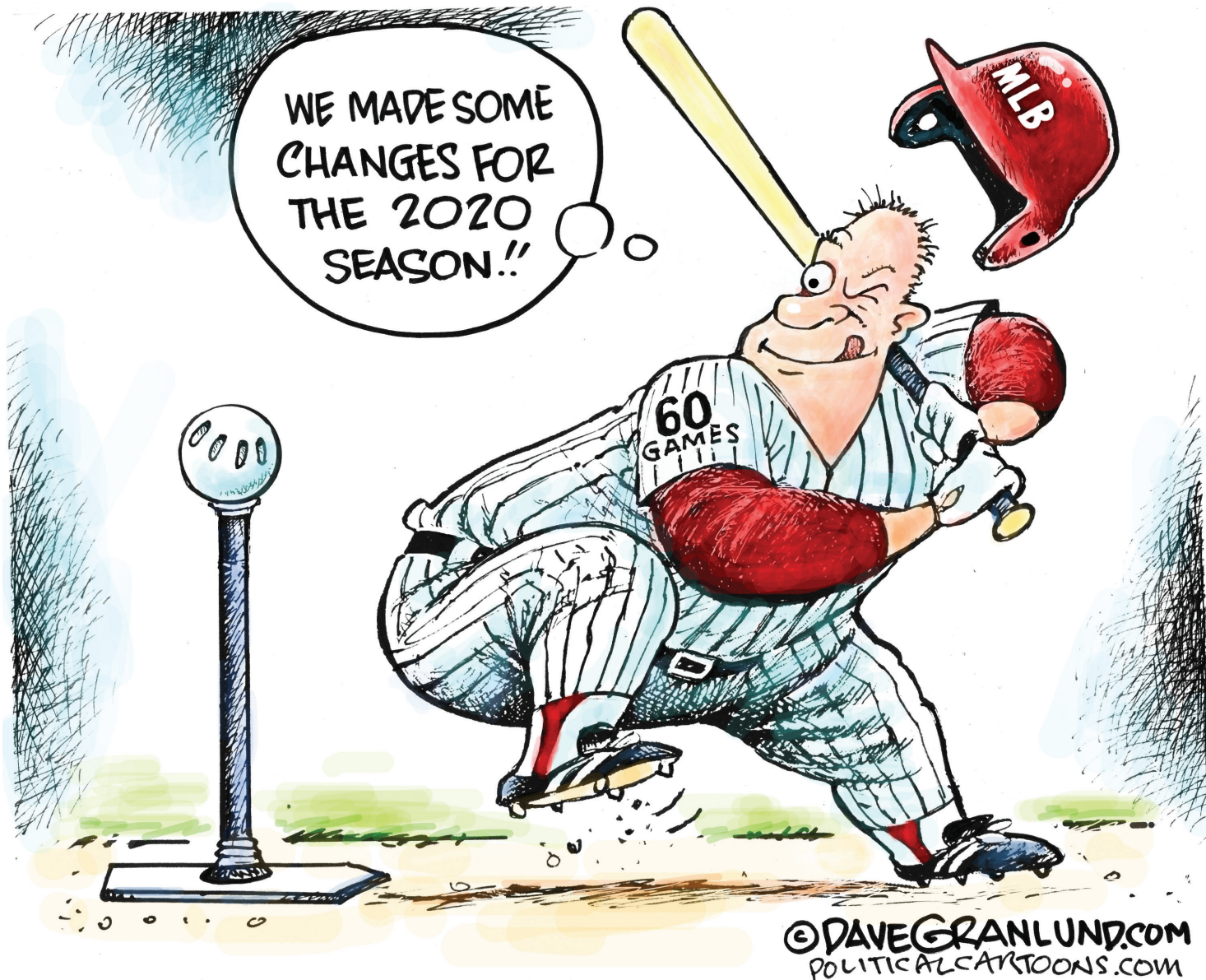
### Follow the money

*"There is another class of coloured people who make a business of keeping the troubles, the wrongs, and the hardships of the Negro race before the public. Having learned that they are able to make a living out of their troubles, they have grown into the settled habit of advertising their wrongs — partly because they want sympathy and partly because it pays. Some of these people do not want the Negro to lose his grievances, because they do not want to lose their jobs."* — Booker T. Washington

Washington noticed long ago what is happening today in the fight for social justice. He co-founded Tuskegee Normal School for teachers, and the school expressed Washington's dedication to the pursuit of self-reliance.

Washington stressed education and entrepreneurship for Black Americans, which is at odds with the "peaceful protests" happening around the country.

He wanted educated people to enter the education field, or the business world, yet



## LETTERS WELCOME

Letters should be exclusive to The Astorian. Letters should be fewer than 250 words and must include the writer's name, address and phone number. You will be contacted to confirm authorship. All letters are subject to editing for space, grammar and factual accuracy. Only two letters per writer are allowed each month. Letters written in response to other letter writers should address the issue at hand, and, rather than mentioning the writer

by name, should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Discourse should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner. Letters in poor taste will not be printed. Send via email to editor@dailyastorian.com, online at bit.ly/astorianletters, in person at 949 Exchange St. in Astoria or 1555 North Roosevelt in Seaside, or mail to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR, 97103.

today we have ongoing mayhem including the destroying of businesses, which in turn causes the loss of jobs for many innocent citizens. And all the while, media outlets and social justice warriors get ratings or larger bank accounts.

If you honestly want to get an informed perspective on what's really going on with all of today's social unrest, do as Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein did during the Watergate era: follow the money. The media/social justice industrial complex is hard at work.

In case you're wondering, Booker T. Washington was born a Black slave.

MATT JANES  
Astoria

### Be heart smart

**A**re you afraid to go to the hospital? Don't be — especially if you have

heart attack symptoms. Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women, killing 1 woman in 3. Forty-eight million women have heart disease. These numbers don't change during pandemics.

Women may feel weary with stress over the coronavirus, social unrest and quarantine fatigue. As a woman living with heart disease, I know stress played a role in my heart attack. I didn't know the symptoms.

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.

As a survivor of a heart attack in 2018, I had all these warning signs, and made excuses for them, because I did not want 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.

Don't let COVID-19 keep you from calling 911 or going to the emergency room. Hospitals are safe. Ignored symptoms make things worse. Health care providers will agree. So be heart smart, please always call 911 — it's far better to have a false alarm than to die from a heart attack.

SUSAN SMITH  
Seaside

### Dangerous cycle

**F**or many years we've seen aggrieved or injured citizens sue law enforcement agencies for violating their rights or the law. With the huge increase of so many more violent interactions documented on video the past three months between law enforcement, military and legally demonstrating citizens, I predict a flood of new lawsuits.

When any law enforcement department or government agency loses a judgment for legal or civil violations, the monetary fine assessed is not paid by the individual officer, who was hired, trained and supervised by government agencies.

I am damned tired of my taxes paying for the law enforcement and military agencies that violate legal and constitutional laws. When will this expensive, violent and dangerous cycle end?

R.D. SMITH  
Gearhart