

OUR VIEW

Don't shortchange our students

As legislators across the nation grapple with revenue shortfalls caused by the shutdown and curtailment of businesses in their states because of the coronavirus pandemic, we issue a plea.

Please, do not balance state budgets on the back of education. Other programs can be trimmed or cut entirely. They will be missed. Tax cuts for the ultrawealthy can and must be reversed. But education is the key to our future.

A strong state economy is the product of a strong K-12, community college, technical school and university system.

While legislators may shrug and say they can't afford to fully fund education, we will argue that they can't afford not to.

During this pandemic, governors and other political leaders have urged people to stay home and to shut down the businesses that pay local, state and federal taxes. It was little understood how much economic damage this would inflict. We are only starting to see the full impacts.

Nationwide, 33 million people were thrown out of work — more than half of the adult population. That is temporary. The number of unemployed will shrink as COVID-19 continues to subside.

The U.S. House has also promised to help states get back on more solid fiscal footing, an aid package the U.S. Senate must get behind.

In the meantime, we urge all of our elected representatives not to



A student performs research.

University of Idaho

do permanent damage by short-changing education to solve a temporary problem.

Whether kindergarten or graduate level research, education is an economic driver. Education produces entrepreneurs, business owners, farmers, fishermen, foresters ... the list goes on.

And it produces good citizens who know more than the bare minimums about physics, chem-

istry, biology, history, language and the many facets of our great civilization.

We support local school boards as being in the best position to weigh the risks of in-person classes. At the same time, we all realize that if we relegate the current generation to online classes for too long and rob them of the richness of a full slate of in-person classes, our economy will suffer. Some students may well thrive with some online classes, but others will tune out and eventually drop out.

Some classes may lend themselves to an online format. Others, not so much. Try learning to weld, raise livestock or repair a tractor online. Try to discuss the mysteries of ancient worlds or the inner workings of DNA on Zoom.

Good luck.

We appreciate that online classes have offered a last-minute substitute for real school and college work.

Make sure high schools, community colleges and universities are adequately funded to safely carry out the classwork and research that are essential to a 21st-century economy. Continue to take scientifically supported actions to drive down the virus caseload, and be ready to loosen or restrict school openings in response to local conditions.

All students in all schools deserve the best possible education, not just for their sake but for the sake of the economy. And it will require more than Zoom.

PLEASE, DO NOT BALANCE STATE BUDGETS ON THE BACK OF EDUCATION. OTHER PROGRAMS CAN BE TRIMMED OR CUT ENTIRELY. THEY WILL BE MISSED. TAX CUTS FOR THE ULTRAWEALTHY CAN AND MUST BE REVERSED. BUT EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO OUR FUTURE.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Simple solutions

This is the time of year when Social Security Beach at Fort Stevens State Park is overrun with fishermen. Trucks park cheek to jowl along the water's edge. The fishermen secure their spots, and do not move until it's time to go home.

Alas, there are no bathroom facilities in this spot. As you walk down the back roads through the dunes, the unmistakable smell of raw sewage lingers in the air. The fishermen don't want to leave their treasured spot, and the park's honey buckets are just too far away. When you've got to go, you've got to go.

If the park took \$5 a car at the entrance to the beach, they could rent honey buckets for the season. Every year, I grouse about the horrible stench. Perhaps next year, this problem could be solved?

HOLT MOORE
Astoria

Trump haters

I can't hold back. If nobody writes in about the recent letters to the editor in The Astorian on Aug. 11, I have to jump in.

These President Donald Trump haters are missing the big picture. They have compared Trump to Hitler, Stalin, Zedong and King George. They accuse him of genocide. They do not go far enough. They left off Jack the Ripper.

Trump is obviously better compared to Darth Vader, Doctor Doom and Lex Luthor. It has the same reality.

ROBERT LIDDYCOAT
Seaside

Track record

Tillamook Mayor Suzanne Weber has a track record of bringing people together on divisive issues. She's calm, experienced, creative and she listens to everyone.

She's a leader. And, she has my vote in November for state representative.

JEAN M. HERMAN
Astoria



KUPER

"You may want to wait and ask again in November."

Best choice

Suzanne Weber is our best choice for state representative. She has been a public school teacher for 30 years. She has gained a lot of political savvy as the mayor of Tillamook.

She already understands how Salem works. Suzanne has a good working relationship with Sen. Betsy Johnson. Suzanne knows how to negotiate. She will be up to speed on day one.

VICTORIA KERIN
Astoria

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 should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Discourse should be civil. Send via email to editor@dailyastorian.com, online at bit.ly/astorianletters, in person at 949 Exchange St. in Astoria or mail to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR., 97103.