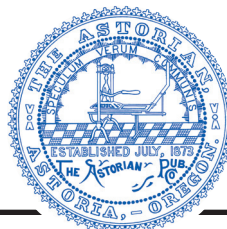


OPINION



the Astorian

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OUR VIEW

Place limits on campaign money

Voters will weigh several statewide ballot measures in the November election. Campaign contribution limits, new tobacco taxes, legalizing psilocybin for therapeutic use and decriminalizing drug possession each pose thorny public policy questions.

Measure 107

Oregon has been among a handful of states with no limits on political campaign contributions.

Measure 107 would amend the state Constitution to allow laws that limit campaign contributions and spending, require disclosure of campaign finance activity and require political advertising to identify the sponsors.

The Oregon Supreme Court ruled in April that a \$500 contribution limit in Multnomah County did not violate free speech protections in the Constitution, a ruling that suggested new limits on campaign money would be legal across the state.

The ballot measure would leave no doubt. The Legislature, local governments and voters, through the initiative process, would be able to set limits.

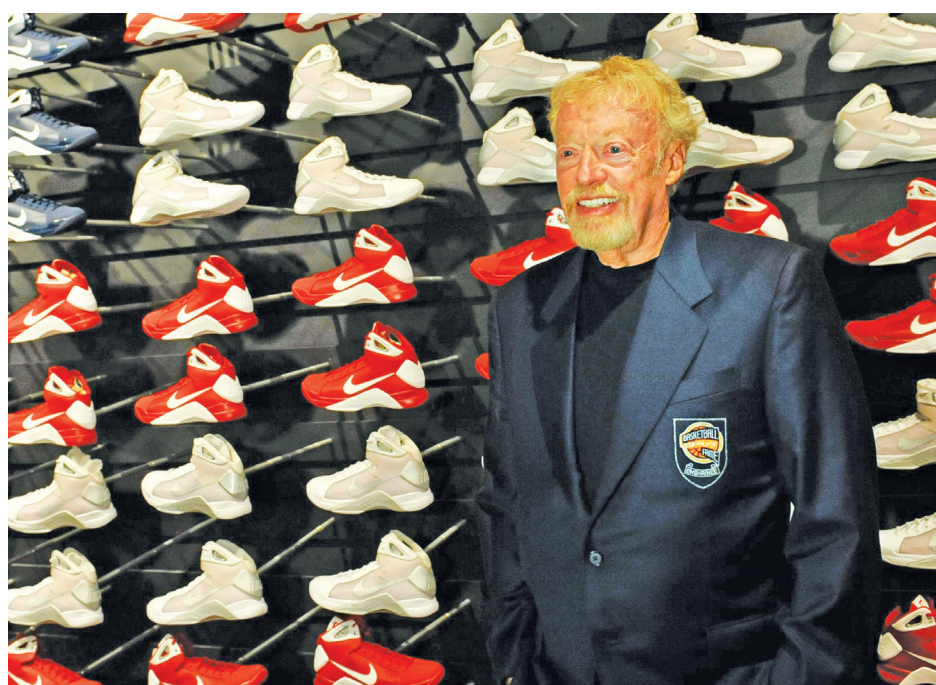
We think some of the rhetoric about money in politics is exaggerated. The same First Amendment that protects the rights of The Astorian to make political endorsements enables individuals, corporations and labor unions to spend money to influence elections.

But reasonable limits on campaign contributions and disclosure requirements do not foreclose free speech.

Vote “yes.”

Measure 108

Looking to discourage smoking and vaping and raise money for public health, state legislators



Nike co-founder Phil Knight donated \$2.5 million to Knute Buehler's Republican campaign for governor in 2018.

have recommended a sizable cigarette tax increase and a new tax on e-cigarettes and nicotine vaping devices.

Measure 108 would raise the tax on a pack of cigarettes by \$2 — to \$3.33. The cap on cigar taxes would climb to \$1, up from 50 cents. The new tax on e-cigarettes and nicotine vaping devices would be 65% of the wholesale price.

The taxes could generate more than \$331 million in the next two-year state budget cycle. Ninety percent would go to the Oregon Health Plan and other public health programs and 10% would go to preventing tobacco use.

We know taxes on sales disproportionately affect low-income residents. But the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lists smoking as the leading cause of preventable death, and many low-income residents rely on the Oregon Health Plan for their medical care.

We also believe the new tax on e-cigarettes and vaping makes sense, particularly given the

increase in vaping among young people.

Vote “yes.”

Measure 109

Therapists who see the potential of psilocybin — a hallucinogen drawn from mushrooms — to treat depression and other mental health conditions want to legalize the drug for use by people 21 and over at licensed service centers.

Under Measure 109, no licenses would be issued until after a two-year development period overseen by the Oregon Health Authority. A sales tax would be imposed on psilocybin products.

The federal Food and Drug Administration has designated psilocybin as a potential breakthrough therapy for depression, but it remains a Schedule I drug under federal law, meaning it has no accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse.

The Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association opposes the measure, warning that “science does not yet indicate that psilocybin is a

safe medical treatment for mental health conditions.”

We believe the idea should be vetted by mental health experts and the Legislature, not voters.

Vote “no.”

Measure 110

There is an emerging consensus in Oregon that treatment, not punishment, is the best approach to drug addiction.

But treatment advocates are divided over Measure 110, which would decriminalize lower-level drug possession and divert marijuana tax money to fund new addiction recovery centers across the state.

Criminal penalties for drug possession — 1 gram or less of heroin; 2 grams or less of cocaine or methamphetamine, for example — would be eliminated. Possession would result in a \$100 fine or completion of a health assessment. Possession of larger amounts of drugs — but not commercial scale — would be reduced to misdemeanors.

A financial impact statement prepared by the state found the measure would reduce marijuana tax revenue that goes to schools, mental health programs, the state police and local governments.

Several leading addiction and mental health treatment providers oppose the measure, arguing it would destabilize existing programs. The Oregon Council for Behavioral Health cautioned that it “provides no new funding, destroys pathways to treatment and recovery and fails to address racial injustice in our systems by decriminalizing a narrow set of charges without resource for larger system innovation.”

We think the Legislature is better equipped to evaluate these issues.

Vote “no.”

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Wolf

#TimberUnity is a powerful and rich political action committee. They are a wolf in sheep's clothing.

Originally, #TimberUnity was made up of log truck drivers concerned about fuel prices and climate change issues. Now hijacked by big corporations, they are pouring big dollar support to very right-wing candidates, including the Republican candidate for Oregon House District 32, who appears very reluctant to call herself a Republican.

#TimberUnity disingenuously claims they are for working families, but take a look at who their endorsed candidates are. They are supporting Suzanne Weber, who has no proof of standing up for working people.

Additionally, Weber's donors are big corporations, including multiple out-of-state corporations. These corporations have never supported the interests of working people, and will continue to cut jobs as they automate their industries.

In contrast, Debbie Boothe-Schmidt has a track record of fighting for our working families, and has over a dozen union endorsements. Unions helped build America's middle class.

Debbie is supported by teachers, nurses and social workers, as well as small-business owners. She has broad, small-dollar support, and will truly represent all the folks in our north Oregon Coast district.

Take time to learn how your vote will work for your interests. Don't believe the false messaging by Weber that is being bought and paid for by obscene amounts of money trying to influence this election.

Study the voters' pamphlet to be an informed voter, then vote for Boothe-Schmidt.

ALETHA S. WESTERBERG
Astoria

Our own values

It is important for our House District 32 communities to have a representa-

tive who can work collaboratively with their colleagues in diverse communities throughout Oregon. We need someone who will not insult others, or flee when legislative deliberations do not go their way.

By the time this is printed, we will all have seen both the candidates' statements and mailed cards from Debbie Boothe-Schmidt and her opponent. Debbie's talk about her qualifications, her values, her priorities and her understanding of what is important to the 32nd District. She says nothing about her opponent.

Suzanne Weber gives a brief background of her education, her career and her job as Tillamook's mayor. What sets her materials apart is her attacks.

Her mailer shows a scary dark figure set against an out-of-control fire, representing (we assume) Debbie. Suzanne is all colorful and smiling. Her statement in the voters' pamphlet again demeans Portland, and plays on the theme that Debbie and her supporters are extreme partisans and/or environmentalists.

Suzanne uses her opportunity not to explain her priorities, but to attack and demonize. These are not approaches which would serve her successfully for us in the Legislature.

The truth is that out-of-area financial support is coming to this campaign. We need to look to our own values and needs, and not to fear. I encourage you to vote for Boothe-Schmidt.

JAN MITCHELL
Astoria

Right choice

Suzanne Weber is the right choice for House District 32. She has experience as an educator, small-business owner and she currently serves as the mayor of Tillamook.

What I admire about Suzanne is she is practical and nonpartisan. She focuses on understanding the issues important to our community, and developing solutions and results based on a common-sense approach, not rooted in a specific agenda

or political philosophy.

She wants our rural North Coast communities to have a voice in Salem, and she vows not to align herself with the priorities of Portland politicians.

We need a representative who represents the North Oregon Coast first and foremost. Please support Weber.

PATRICK NOFIELD
Cannon Beach

Travesty

The recent “path to peace” negotiated by President Donald Trump, Jared Kushner, Benjamin Netanyahu, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain is a travesty.

This plan ignores and neglects the rights of the Palestinian people, who were not consulted or considered. The occupation of their lands is a blatant overreach. Honoring the return of all Zionists to the territory, based on an obscure biblical reference, is hypocritical.

Why shouldn't white settlers return Native American people to their land? The U.S. displaced the native people less than 200 years ago. Ask your neighbor if they would return their home to the displaced native people.

SAADA HADDAD
Astoria

Interests

In 2018, Rep. Tiffany Mitchell won by about 5 percentage points, and just a few short months later it was apparent that she did not represent the people of House District 32.

Rather, she represented the big unions and special-interest groups that paid her way to the legislative seat. Don't make that mistake again.

A vote for anyone other than Suzanne Weber is a vote to continue to raise our taxes and implement ridiculous fees, taking money from the vulnerable population on a fixed income, single parents and families already struggling to make ends meet.

It would be a vote to continue with legislative representatives aligned with big unions and special-interest groups.

Weber has the interests of only the citizens of House District 32 and the support of those from all parties. Vote for Weber.

VINEETA LOWER
Seaside

Puffery

There is no more important issue facing Oregon today than forest industry reform. Yes, industry reform. The industry operates as Big Ag, and boasts of itself as Big Timber. What puffery.

Loss of sawmill jobs due to conservative forestry is a hoax. There can be no domestic log shortage as long as raw unprocessed logs are loaded on ships and sent to offshore sawmills. In the world most of us live in, log exports equal job exports. We have been exporting saw logs since the mid-1960s, and now it is not even worthy of notice, question or comment?

Why are Big Ag, and its wholly owned subsidiary Big Timber, and their captive legislators — Sen. Betsy (the buck stops here) Johnson, et al. — absolutely silent about log exports?

Bottom line: forest practices, meaning labor costs, are prohibitive. There is no palatable way to speak of the unspeakable; nothing is more upsetting than watching woods workers fall in line as #TimberUnity showcasing their captivity and solidarity with their bosses. Labor has lost its way, and has no place at the table.

What will it take for the concerned citizens of Oregon to fully appreciate the incestuous arrangements the sawmill lobby has with the Oregon Department of Forestry? Why buy logs from real estate investment trust forest lands, when public forests are available on demand for high-quality raw material? What, indeed, is the highest, best use of our forests?

Reform business practices, and forest practices will follow.

GARY DURHEIM
Seaside