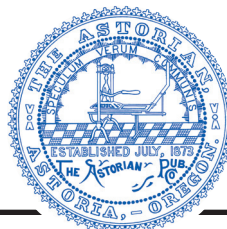


# OPINION



# the Astorian

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Founded in 1873

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## OUR VIEW

# A reset on climate and infrastructure

President Joe Biden has the opportunity for a reset on climate change and infrastructure.

On the North Coast, we are vulnerable to rising sea levels, landslides and wildfires. Our economic survival depends on preserving the Columbia River as a vital shipping channel, improving the Port of Astoria, strengthening our highways, roads and bridges and preparing for a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami.

We look to the federal government to have the foresight to address climate change and the wisdom to invest in infrastructure. For the past four years, that foresight and wisdom has been absent.

We agree with President Biden that climate change is an existential threat. On the international stage, we believe the United States should recommit to the Paris climate accord and pressure other major polluters, particularly China, to take stronger steps to contain greenhouse gas emissions. On the national stage, we favor the move away from coal as an electric power source and incentives for the auto industry to convert to cleaner-burning fuel and electric vehicles.

Last year, we changed our mind and supported cap and trade before the Oregon Legislature as a step forward on climate change after opposing House Bill 2020 in 2019. While Oregon should not wait for the federal government to take action, we think regional and national approaches have the



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Addressing climate change and investing in infrastructure are priorities for our region.

potential to be the most successful.

Infrastructure is an essential component of Biden's climate agenda. The chance for a clean energy future and new jobs that position the United States to compete in the global economy is in front of us.

But investments in infrastructure can happen on a separate track. Climate change remains politically

polarizing and it will take time and patience to reach consensus. The bipartisan enthusiasm for an infrastructure package has only grown during the coronavirus pandemic.

Biden intends to unveil a "Build Back Better Recovery Plan" in February that could serve as an outline for Congress. In a speech last week, the Democrat referred to reviving the nation's manufacturing

sector and significant investments in research and development for new technology.

Given four years where "Infrastructure Week" became a punchline on Twitter, the new president shouldn't overpromise. A bread-and-butter blueprint would be fine.

"It's time to stop talking about infrastructure and finally start building it," Biden said. "Millions of good-paying jobs that put Americans to work rebuilding our roads, bridges and ports to make them more climate resilient, to make it faster, cheaper and cleaner to transport American-made goods across our country and around the world."

We hope the Biden administration works collaboratively with Democrats and Republicans to craft a spending plan that can reach the states as soon as possible. State and local governments can leverage the federal money and upgrade crumbling infrastructure.

While we would place the Port and some of our highways and bridges at the top of the priority list on the North Coast, we also would like to close the broadband gap that deprives too many rural communities of high-speed internet access.

There is a tendency after a presidential election to raise expectations about what is possible. We expect Biden to lead on climate change, but we don't think the president — or any one leader — can magically solve the problem.

We know an infrastructure package is achievable. And we do expect Biden and a Congress controlled by Democrats to deliver.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Concerned

Among the many abuses of power that President Donald Trump has committed, I am concerned that he will pardon those who will be convicted of acts related to the insurrection that occurred in our nation's capital on Jan. 6.

Some suggestions for the criteria for presidential pardons might include the following:

- Presidents should not be allowed to self-pardon.
- Vice presidents who assume the presidency in the event of a conviction should not be allowed to pardon their predecessor without the consent of two-thirds majority of both houses.
- Crimes that involve campaign finance laws, tax evasion, insurrection and other politically-related chicanery should not be pardoned that were committed under that respective president's administration.

If any of your readers agree with these sentiments, I encourage them to contact House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer, U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley and U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici to consider these suggestions.

Pelosi and Schumer do have contact options on their websites that allow residents not living in their jurisdictions to provide feedback regarding citizen concerns.

DUANE THOMPSON  
Seaside

### Criminal

As an octogenarian, I find it difficult to wrap my brain around the "new normal" that exists for our young children and young adults.

I was shaken to the core by the following quote in an editorial regarding Jan. 6 by Theunis Bates, the managing editor of The Week magazine:

"During the Capitol siege, young staffers for House Speaker Nancy Pelosi took cover in a conference room, barricaded the door, turned off the lights and hid under a table in silence. . . survival tactics they had learned growing up with active-shooter drills in schools."

My heart is breaking for our young people and the terrible things that we adults are doing to their lives, their futures and their world. It is beyond unfair, it is criminal. Shame, shame on us.

LARRY ALLEN  
Astoria

### Shared version

To have a civil society, we must have a shared version of facts and reality. President Donald Trump tells the world he won the election in a landslide. That is not true. He lost by seven million popular votes, and he lost the Electoral College vote 306-232.

He says the states must investigate to find election fraud. They did. There was none. He says the courts must look at the evidence of election fraud. They did. There was no evidence; that's why the court cases were dismissed.

Those who study tyrannical leaders have labeled such a gambit "the big lie." Tyrants create a false version of reality. By strength of personality, and playing on fears and prejudices of the populace, they convince their followers of events that are not true or real.

Trumpism is built on the big lie. Supporters say they are abiding by the Constitution. They are not; they are subverting it. They say they are protecting democracy. They are not; they are trying to overthrow it.

They accuse Vice President Mike Pence and elected representatives of being traitors. They are not. They acted per the Constitution to certify what our nation's security agencies have assured the world was a free and fair election. Followers claim to be patriots. They are not; they are seditionists mounting an insurrection.

Trumpism is anti-democratic, and infused with racism, anti-Semitism, white supremacy, conspiracy, violent rhetoric and lies. It is time for Republicans to turn away from Trumpism and rejoin civil society.

ERIC HALPERIN  
Gearhart

### Stand up for truth

An open letter to the Clatsop County Republican Party and its Central Committee chairmen/chairwomen and delegates:

In light of the violent insurgence and protests in Washington, D.C., driven by the rhetoric and instructions spelled out by President Donald Trump to fight, be strong and march to the Capitol to make your voices be heard—as he continued to repeat unfounded claims of election fraud—it is your civic duty and responsibility as representatives of Clatsop County and the Republican Party to help end this tide of misinformation and division by directly

denouncing the lie that the 2020 presidential election was "stolen."

Study the facts from a variety of sources. There is no evidence presented, despite over 50 lawsuits filed by the Trump campaign. No judge, even those Trump appointed, found any viable proof, which is the very thing this country is based on.

If you do not denounce those who refused to accept the results, you are complicit in the violence that occurred and could once again follow, even in our own Oregon State Capitol.

Follow the lead of the growing number of Republican leaders around the county, stand up for truth. But not truth based on a limited viewpoint, but based in facts and the U.S. systems of justice, law, democracy and decency.

Certify the election results, publicly. Help heal the nation.

JUDITH P. NILAND  
Astoria

### Trump's lie

Adolf Hitler once said, "Tell a lie loud enough and long enough, and people will believe it." President Donald Trump has taken this advice, and for the past two months has lied to the American people that he won the 2020 election.

Now, he has used this lie to enrage people into committing violence against our nation's Capitol, which has left citizens dead and others injured. The truth is he lost. There was no voter fraud or conspiracy, he just received fewer votes than President Joe Biden.

KEITH NEAL  
Astoria

### Party of Lincoln?

Shocking, terrifying and horrific are but a few of the adjectives that come to mind when thinking about the attempted coup in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 6.

A rally called by the president of the U.S. to overthrow the legal votes of the American people, and the certification by all 50 states that President Joe Biden won the election of Nov. 3, will go down as a very low point in our history.

Only President Donald Trump could assert that he won an election in which he garnered seven million votes less than his opponent. His claims have been shot down by judges in numerous states where he lost. Make no mistake, America's very own

Adolf Hitler showed his true colors when he incited his stormtroopers to stop the Congress from certifying Biden's win. This insurrection also caused the death of at least five people, numerous injuries and property destruction.

Notably, the chair of the Clatsop County Republicans was at the rally to support Trump's disinformation about election results, and participate along with QAnon supporters, neo-Nazi and white power groups, and others who falsely believe that Trump won the election.

Old Abe Lincoln must be rolling over in his tomb at the thought of Trumpers and their actions. "Patriots," it's time to take down your Trump flags and support the Constitution of the U.S.

NED HEAVENRICH  
Brownsmead

### Deep divide

The events that have taken place since the general election have made clear a deep divide in the country.

Not just in political associations, but the gap in data-driven information, scientific facts ignored, refusal to accept the rule of law, as well as the naked grab for power by politicians to remain in power, with complete disregard for the well-being of all citizens.

The political disregard of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for pandemic prevention are the cause of over 4,000 deaths per day.

The refusal to accept judgments by numerous courts at all levels to support the alleged vote counts are all clear indicators of low voter information. The seditious attacks on the Congress are extremely concerning, as it indicates radical movement based on unsupported conspiracy. Disregard for veterans and current members of the military is especially disgusting.

During the takeover of the Capitol, police officers were killed and beaten, including one traitor beating an officer with an American flag.

We no longer have an honest debate over political ideas. It's down to threatening those who disagree. We even had a proposal on the county ballot that attempted to usurp all federal, state and local gun laws.

If we expect to have a free and open society, we must have a better informed constituency.

RICHARD McINTOSH  
Astoria