



Opinion

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Drug/Prostitution Free Zones Take Away Our Rights

Drug and Prostitution Free Zones target certain neighborhoods by using a "profile" to determine which areas have more crime than others. Offenders cannot physically be in or pass through the designated areas for any reason during a certain calendar period.

These zones discriminate against those who have made mistakes and changed their lives for the better. This is not a solution to the problem of crime in our neighborhoods, and is not constitutionally supported by our Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Crime is prevalent throughout this entire city. Drugs and prostitution have never existed in one area, but are as mobile and diverse as the individuals that commit them.

Statistics show that these targeted communities are usually the lower income, minority neighborhoods. They're communities with private homes, apartment buildings and busi-

nesses, all of which are designed to be accessible to all.

The excluded individuals are barred for three months prior to their arraignment, and then up to one entire year after conviction and sentencing. The Portland City Council calls this disciplinary action a "sanction."

It is through this terminology that our rights are violated. The zones create double punishment for the same offense, delay the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury, and result in cruel and unusual punishment; discriminatory treatment under the 5th, 6th, 8th, 9th and 14th Amendments to the Constitution.

A person's past should remain their past. Yet within these zones, the ability for suspects and convicted criminals to rehabilitate themselves in their own communities is denied.

How many civil rights movements is it going to take until it is decided that discrimination of any kind is most definitely wrong.

It seems ironic that in predominantly upper class white neighborhoods, no drug exclusion zones exist nor have been proposed. It seems that drugs and prostitution are being treated only as a minority problem.

The Constitution was designed for everyone, yet it seems that a few powerful people are once again finding ways to discriminate. They are giving the rights to a few to take away the rights of many.

People like me, who are former offenders, have a voice that needs to be heard.

DFZ zones do not solve crime. They only perpetuate a new type of discrimination.

There once was a man long ago who walked among us and forgave everyone. Instead of condemning our futures, he gave us a chance at redemption to improve our lives for the better.

Where is that kind of spirit today?
Tracie A. Mitchell
Northeast Portland

Wyden Welcomes Jeffords to Democratic Caucus

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., welcomed Sen. Jim Jeffords, I-Vt., into the Democratic caucus, saying that the new Democratic majority in the Senate will be committed to promoting a bipartisan approach toward working on behalf of the public's interest.

"One of our biggest challenges in Washington is to build effective bipartisan coalitions to work on real solutions to America's problems. The decision by Senator Jeffords, and the

resulting Democratic majority, will help pave the way for a balanced, more effective bipartisan approach in the future. "Our challenge over the coming months will be to learn from and change the unfortunate political atmosphere that contributed to Senator Jeffords' decision. "To do the peoples' business, Congress and the White House must recommit to bipartisanship as the vehicle through which to get things accomplished," Wyden said.

Numbers Speak Louder Than Words

While backers of President Bush's tax cut point to the average tax cut, data released by the Oregon Center for Public Policy shows that the typical Oregonian will get much less, and 23 percent of Oregonians will get nothing. One percent of Oregonians will reap about 40 percent of the tax cut's benefits.

"The President proposes a windfall for a very few while at the same time cutting health care for the uninsured and child care for working families," said Jeff Thompson, the center's policy analyst and economist. "As our economy slows, the typical Oregonian needs help today, with a refundable child tax

credit, an expanded Earned Income Credit, or a prosperity bonus. Trickle down from the wealthiest is not likely."

The figures show that the wealthiest one percent of Oregonians, with annual incomes averaging \$951,000, will receive 39.8 percent of the tax cut.

The poorest 20 percent of Oregonians will receive less than two percent of the total tax cut while the top 20 percent of Oregonians will receive about 60 percent of the tax cut.

Thompson noted that "over the next ten years, the portion of the President's tax cut that goes to the nation's wealthiest one percent will exceed the combined cost of all of the new discretionary spending ini-

tiatives - education, a Medicare prescription drug benefit, as well as additional defense spending - proposed in the President's spending plan.

"Most Oregonians did not reap the benefits of the economic prosperity of the 1990s and they will get precious little from the Bush tax plan," said Thompson. "The Bush tax plan is a feast for the comfortable and crumbs for the struggling."

The Oregon Center for Public Policy is a non-profit research organization that analyzes budget, tax, and program issues important to low- and moderate-income Oregonians, the majority of Oregonians.

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Voting Irregularities Deeply Troubling

I commend Chairperson Mary Frances Berry and the members of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights for their investigative report on voting irregularities in Florida during the 2000 presidential election.

Election reform is a top priority for the Democratic Party and I am deeply troubled by the Commission's findings. Not only has the Commission uncovered clear and conclusive evidence that Floridians were disenfranchised, this report also confirms what we at the Democratic Party have already known: Gov. Jeb Bush and Secretary of State Katherine Harris were negligent in preventing the disenfranchisement of Florida's voters, in particular minority voters and voters in low-income communities. I am committed to protecting the voting rights of all Americans, and I am appalled that 54 percent of the 180,000 discarded ballots in Florida were African-American votes.

I am equally disturbed that state officials, Bush and Harris included, chose to disregard clear warnings concerning inaccurate felon lists for a voter purge effort which resulted in the removal of many eligible voters from the registration rolls. "While Florida's recent election reform legislation was a step in the right direction, this report proves that money for upgraded voting machinery will not be enough.

Florida and many other states will need more voter education and training, effective poll place management and enforcement of the federal Civil Rights Act, Voting Rights Act and local election laws to have real election reform."

Terry McAuliffe
Democratic National Committee
Chairman

Seeking African American Families with ADHD Children for a Research Study

ADHD, Ethnicity, and Family Environment

Who is the Principal Investigator?

Judy Kendall, RN, Ph.D.
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503-494-3890

What is the study about?

This study is about gaining an understanding of what it is like for a family to live with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Virtually no research exists on how African American and Hispanic families experience and manage ADHD, what health needs they may have, and what opportunities they have for receiving these services. The study will involve two meetings, about 2 hours each, at your home or place convenient for you.

Which families are eligible?

- Families with at least one child (age 6-19) with a diagnosis of ADHD.
- Families with at least two people (the ADHD child and one parent). Hopefully both parents and siblings will participate as well.
- Families that are willing to participate in one interview and complete a series of questionnaires.
- Families that speak English or are willing to work through an interpreter.
- Parents that are able to read and write at the 5th grade level or are willing to have the questions read to them.

All information will be held strictly confidential.

There will be no cost to you for participating in the research.

In appreciation of your time and contribution,
Each family will receive \$50 after each meeting for a possible total of \$100.

If interested please call 503-494-4122.

Funded by National Institute of Health/National Institute of Nursing Research

OHSU IRB # 5275