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OUR VIEW

Get set as new law on pot kicks in

The 2014 vote to legalize recreational marijuana use in Oregon divided residents, but state authorities are working in a pro-active manner to hone the details of how the new law will work.

With issues occurring elsewhere where recreational marijuana has been made legal, the commendable strategy of the Oregon Liquor Control Commission is to try to answer questions — and head off potential problems — before the law and accompanying rules take effect July 1.

For those of you intending to smoke pot, be aware of several key components of the law:

- It will be legal for Oregon residents aged 21 and older to grow up to four plants per household on their property. Adults may possess up to 8 ounces of usable marijuana in the home and carry up to 1 ounce when out. The limit of four plants is regardless of the number of occupants in the home. It does not mean, for example, that four adults in a residence can grow 16 plants.
- Smoking marijuana in public remains illegal. The OLCC has worked hard to define “public.”
- Minors cannot possess or use marijuana, even where they live.
- Driving while impaired remains a criminal offense.
- Measure 91 did not make any changes to employment law. As a result, your employer could discipline or fire you for testing positive at your place of work. And because marijuana remains in your system for days or a week after smoking, be aware that a pot-filled weekend or vacation could still land you in trouble with your boss.

Also, Measure 91 was specifically written to have no impact on existing medical marijuana regulations, which came into effect after that was legalized by a ballot measure in 1998.

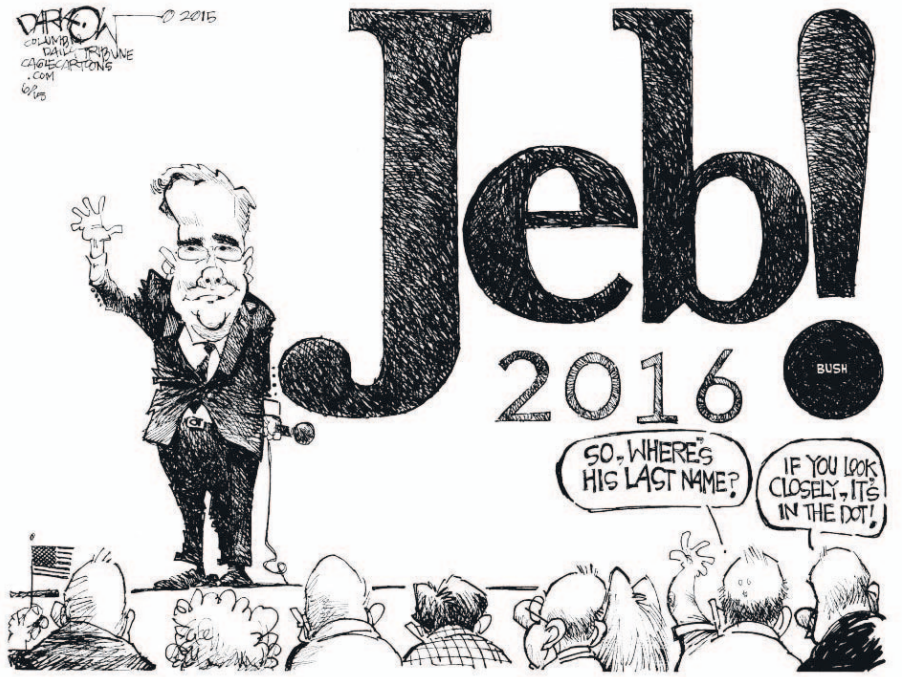
In conjunction with a public awareness campaign about personal possession and use, the OLCC is drawing up regulations to tax and license marijuana sold commercially. Tax revenue — estimated at \$18 million over a two-year period — would be allocated to schools, local governments, police and drug services.

The OLCC will begin accepting applications from growers, wholesalers and processors on Jan. 4, 2016, with residents able to buy their drug from a retail outlet once rules are in place in fall 2016. Public input is still being sought on these rules and now is the time to comment.

The way the new law was written, the ability of local governments to regulate or restrict the potential influx of commercial vendors is minimal. Law enforcement agencies and local leaders would do well to accept the inevitability that Oregon’s social landscape is about to make a significant change and act accordingly.

For more details, and a list of FAQ, log on to www.whatslegaloregon.com Anyone with questions may email marijuana@oregon.gov or call 800-452-6522. For information about medical marijuana, log on to www.mmj.oregon.gov

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board of Publisher Kathryn Brown, Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, and Opinion Page Editor Tim Trainor. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.



Too worried about minutiae instead of the planet’s health

It shocks me how gross people can be.

My older brother and I fish at the McKay Reservoir daily, and every day we pick up trash, glass and things that appear overnight. We have caught eight diapers in one hole (they call the second boat launch), glass all over, nails, plastic and other things.

Why can’t people take out what they carry in? Diapers are in a place where people swim and get fish to eat — it’s kind of like someone walking into your kitchen and taking a dump on your table.

What happened to this country? How about some live-feed cameras so everyone can see who is doing this. A fair judge would let us go dump in their homes, trash things and whatever. People are killing the animals with trash and who knows what kind of poisons are brewing from their waste in the reservoir.

In Pendleton they worry about odor laws, but trashing the planet is

OK? I see a problem with what is important to those in charge. No, I am not a marijuana grower — it’s not about that anyhow, it’s about doing your job to protect us and the earth from those who should be locked away.

Tim Z. Ziegler
Pendleton

Death penalty should not so quickly be off the table

We should give considerable attention to the death penalty for serious tragic murders and senseless killings. It is a national concern and most people are opposed to it. Yet, it seems to me there are cases where such violence should carry the death penalty.

In a recent news story (*Time* June, 15, 2015), George Mason University professor Ira Schoen agreed. He wrote: “To see individuals like Charles Manson continue to be clothed, fed, housed ... is a travesty of justice, and an intolerable insult to the families of the real victims.”

An alternative came from

retired NYPD lieutenant Michael German, who wrote, “It shocks and angers me when I see convicted murderers, some of whom are allowed to plead to lesser crimes, being released after doing only a small fraction of their original sentences. I would feel much better about getting rid of the death penalty if convicted killers would have to serve out their full terms. Public safety should trump second chances for killers.”

Locally, we have a tragic killing of three people in the summer of 2014. A Umatilla man, Francisco J. Resendez Miranda, is 24 and has been charged with three counts of aggravated first-degree murder by the Benton County Superior Court. If convicted of even one count of aggravated murder, he is looking at life in prison without the possibility of release. He won’t face the death penalty although prosecutors allege he killed Abigail Torres-Renteria, 23, Victoria Torres, 19, and David Perez-Saucedo, 22. The charges include the aggravating circumstance that Torres-Renteria was almost nine months pregnant

when she was killed.

Miranda is being held in the Benton County jail in Kennewick without bail because the charges are aggravated murder. According to court documents, he has U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement hold as well. This is a case where the public should be aware of how justice is served.

As Professor Schoen points out, life in prison for Miranda could mean taxpayers will be funding his clothing, food, housing, medical and dental needs for many years. Think about how much more useful that money would mean to education, child care, or care for senior citizens. Where is the justice?

Dorys C. Grover
Pendleton

Wolf pack looking for cut of state funds

The wolves of Pack 6672 have voted to apply for funds designated for Umatilla County. I didn’t know what fladry was, but found out it is a line of colored flags attached to a rope. We use it to locate the area where sheep or cattle can be found. If we are awarded \$10,000, 100 yards of fladry and 156 flea and tick collars, we will relocate our pack to the western foothills of the Cascade Mountains. If our application is approved, please have one of the ODFW fellows leave a bone at den 16.

Wolfishly yours, A. Wolf, pack master

As told to Mike Mehren, wolf listener
Hermiston

LETTERS POLICY

The East Oregonian welcomes original letters of 400 words or less on public issues and public policies for publication in the newspaper and on our website. The newspaper reserves the right to withhold letters that address concerns about individual services and products or letters that infringe on the rights of private citizens. Submitted letters must be signed by the author and include the city of residence and a daytime phone number. The phone number will not be published. Unsigned letters will not be published. Send letters to Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.



IT’S THE SAME OLD SCRIPT—HUBRIS FOLLOWED BY MAYHEM FOLLOWED BY BUCKETS OF BLOOD. THESE SEQUELS PRACTICALLY WRITE THEMSELVES!

OTHER VIEWS

Democrats being Democrats

On Friday, House Democrats shocked almost everyone by rejecting key provisions needed to complete the Trans-Pacific Partnership, an agreement the White House wants but much of the party doesn’t. On Saturday Hillary Clinton formally began her campaign for president, and surprised most observers with an unapologetically liberal and populist speech.

These are, of course, related events. The Democratic Party is becoming more assertive about its traditional values, a point driven home by Clinton’s decision to speak on Roosevelt Island. You could say that Democrats are moving left. But the story is more complicated and interesting than this simple statement can convey.

You see, ever since Ronald Reagan’s election in 1980, Democrats have been on the ideological defensive. Even when they won elections they seemed afraid to endorse clearly progressive positions, eager to demonstrate their centrism by supporting policies like cuts to Social Security that their base hated. But that era appears to be over. Why?



PAUL KRUGMAN
Comment

Ever since Ronald Reagan’s election in 1980, Democrats have been on the ideological defensive.

I’m referring to the kind of people — many, though not all, from Wall Street — who go to lots of international meetings where they assure each other that prosperity is all about competing in the global economy, and that this means supporting trade agreements and cutting social spending. Such people have influence in part because of their campaign contributions, but also because of the belief that they really know how the world works.

As it turns out, however, they don’t. In the 1990s the purported wise men blithely assured us that we had nothing to fear from financial deregulation; we did. After crisis struck, thanks in large part to that very deregulation, they warned us that we should be very afraid of bond investors, who would punish America for its budget deficits; they didn’t. So why believe them when they insist that we must approve an unpopular trade deal?

And this loss of credibility means that if Clinton makes it to the White House she’ll govern very differently from the way her husband did in the 1990s.

As I said, you can describe all of this as a move to the left, but there’s more to it than that — and it’s not at all symmetric to the Republican move right. Democrats are adopting ideas that work and rejecting ideas that don’t, whereas Republicans are doing the opposite.

And no, I’m not being unfair. Obamacare, which was once a conservative idea, is working better than even supporters expected; so Democrats are committed to defending its achievements, while Republicans are more fanatical than ever in their efforts to destroy it. Modestly higher taxes on the wealthy haven’t hurt the economy, while promises that tax cuts will have magical effects have proved disastrously wrong; so Democrats have become more comfortable with a modest tax-and-spend agenda, while Republicans are more firmly in the grip of tax-cutting cranks than ever. And so on down the line.

Of course, changes in ideology matter only to the extent that they can influence policy. And while the electoral odds probably favor Clinton, and Democrats could retake the Senate, they have very little chance of retaking the House. So changes in the Democratic Party may take a while to change America as a whole. But something important is happening, and in the long run it will matter a great deal.

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Paul Krugman joined *The New York Times* in 1999 as a columnist on the Op-Ed Page and continues as professor of Economics and International Affairs at Princeton University.