

# EAST OREGONIAN

Founded October 16, 1875

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## OUR VIEW

# Oregon should raise smoking age to 21

Some in Washington state are trying to raise the legal smoking age from 18 to 21, a step that should be adopted by Oregon and throughout the nation.

It will be a challenge to get all the pieces in place during the remainder of Washington's short legislative session this winter.

A bill to increase the tobacco possession age has passed a House committee, but the *Everett Herald* reported this

Tuesday that the overall legislation to turn control of federal land into opposition based on concerns about tax revenue and fairness. The age increase is supported by 65 percent of Washington residents, according to polling, and has a strong advocate in state Attorney General Bob Ferguson.

Desire for the change is driven by modern awareness that teenage tobacco addictions are difficult to kick and lead to lifetimes of adverse health consequences.

By the time they reach age 21,

evidence suggests young people are less likely to take up smoking. At the same time, 18- to 20-year-olds currently are major sources of illegal tobacco for younger teens.

Butting up against the obvious benefits of raising the tobacco age is the crass estimate that Washington would miss out on \$10.4 million in taxes in its current cycle and \$21.9 million in the 2017-19 budget period.

A few legislators also cite the unfairness of restricting tobacco use for an age group that serves in the military. This is about like saying they shouldn't have to wear motorcycle helmets or fasten their seatbelts. Keeping young people off tobacco is one of the kindest steps legislators can take, irrespective of whether they are in the armed services.

So far, only Hawaii has enacted this smart and benevolent 21 tobacco age. Oregon, Washington and the rest of the nation should all get on board.

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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.

## OTHER VIEW

# State, local government acquires risk along with land

The (Eugene) Register-Guard

Thirty-plus years after the "Sagebrush Rebellion" fizzled out, there's been a renewed push to turn control of federal land in the West — where the bulk of it lies — over to the states.

In 2012, Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer, a Republican, vetoed a proposal to transfer 25 million acres of federal land there — including parks and historic sites — over to the state, citing concerns about constitutionality. That same year, Arizona voters turned down a similar ballot measure by a two-thirds majority.

But last year, federal lands legislation was introduced again. Brewer's successor, Doug Ducey, also vetoed two land-transfer bills

proposed by his fellow Republicans. One bill would have authorized the state to sue the federal government, which owns about 40 percent of the land in Arizona, if it declined to hand over the land.

Ducey did sign another bill, however, to set up a committee to look into the possibilities of forcing a transfer of federal lands.

The Nevada Legislature passed a resolution last year telling the federal government to turn over tens of millions of acres to the state. And Nevada GOP Congressman Mark Amodei is backing federal legislation to that effect.

The Utah Legislature, which passed a bill in 2012 requiring transfer of federal land, has hired an attorney and is considering suing the federal government.

And in Oregon, state Rep. Carl Wilson, R-Grants Pass, introduced a bill last year that would have set up a task force to look at transferring federal land to state control. About 52 percent of the land in Oregon, or more than 32 million acres, is owned by the federal government. About half of the federally owned land is on national forests.

Wilson's bill didn't make it out of committee, but among those testifying in favor of it were representatives of Clackamas County; the Oregon Citizens Lobby, a conservative activist group; the Association of Oregon Counties; and the American Lands Council, a nonprofit group backed by Americans for Prosperity, a think tank supported by billionaire brothers Charles and David Koch.

Testifying against HB 3240 were representatives of Trout Unlimited, the Sierra Club and Oregon Wild.

The driving force behind this renewed interest in turning federal lands over to states boils down to one word: Money. It's what's on the land or under

it — timber, oil, gas and minerals — that the transfer supporters are interested in.

It's understandable that some states and counties — particularly those that are cash-strapped and still recovering from the recession — would eye those resources with longing.

But there's a very real question about whether the costs of a land transfer would outweigh the benefits, and whether there is in fact a pot of gold at the end of that particular rainbow.

The most in-depth analysis so far of the pros and cons of transferring federal land is a 784-page analysis done in Utah by three public universities. The report is an indicator of how complex this issue is and why taking over federal land isn't an automatic ticket to peace and prosperity.

The conclusion of the report, which took 18 months to complete, was that the state would take on a large financial burden if it assumed control of federal lands — about \$245 million a year, including hefty bills for fire control and suppression.

It also would lose federal revenues, including lease payments and payrolls, and there likely would be a significant impact on the state's tourism industry. There were further costs that weren't as easy to quantify, the report noted, such as quality of life, which can factor into individuals' and businesses' decisions about where to locate.

In the end, the report said, Utah could come out on the positive side of the ledger, but only if certain conditions were met. These ifs were major ones, including finding a way to survive the initial years following the transfer, when outgo would exceed income; production and prices of oil and gas remaining stable and high; and the federal government being willing to continue forking over 100 percent of the royalties from oil and gas wells.

The report is a warning that taking over the federal land is going to be a risky business, one that was going to require sacrifices and that might not pay off in the end.

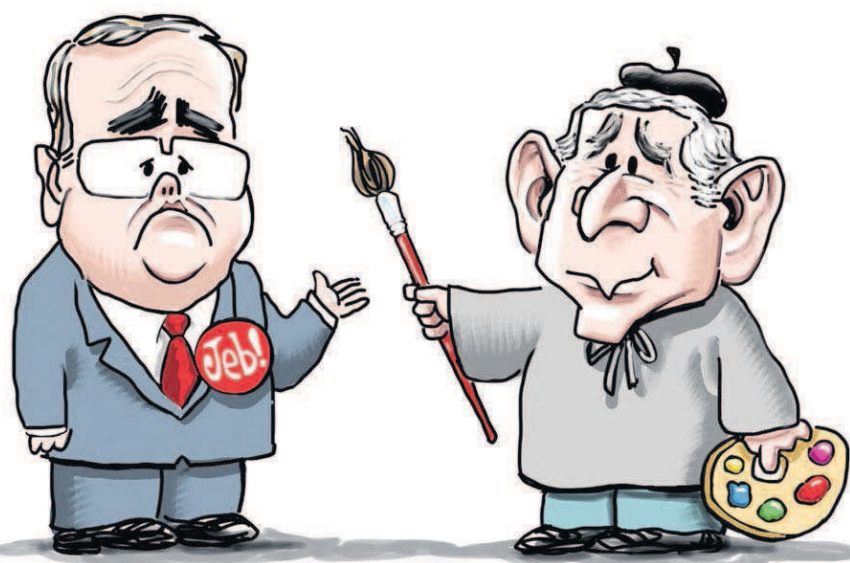
There are lessons here for Oregon and other Western states with significant amounts of federally owned land. Oregon will no doubt be faced with more proposals in the future to take control of public lands, with the goal of monetizing them. But as the Utah study showed, this isn't a case of opening taps and letting the money flow.

There are very real costs and concerns about the effect of this latter-day version of the Sagebrush Rebellion. It's not a quick and easy way to economic security, nor is it an assured route to prosperity.

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## THE BATON IS PASSED



## OTHER VIEWS

# Three views of marriage

Two years ago the Northwestern University psychologist Eli Finkel had an article in *The New York Times* describing how marriage is polarizing: The best marriages today are better than the best marriages of generations ago; the worst marriages now are worse; overall, the average marriage is weaker than the average marriage in days of yore. Expectations about marriage have risen, Finkel wrote. People now want marriage to satisfy their financial, emotional and spiritual needs. But while some people spend a lot of one-on-one time working on their marriage, and reap the benefits, most people spend less time, and things slowly decay.

The way we talk about marriage is polarizing, too. If you read the popular literature, there are three different but not mutually exclusive lenses through which to think about marriage decisions.

Most of the popular advice books adopt a psychological lens. These books start with the premise that getting married is a daunting prospect. Forty-five percent of marriages end in divorce; 10 percent of couples separate but do not divorce.

The psychologists want you to think analytically as well as romantically about whom to marry. Pay attention to traits. As Ty Tashiro wrote in "The Science of Happily Ever After," you want to marry someone who scores high in "agreeableness," someone who has a high concern for social harmony, who is good at empathy, who is nice. You want to avoid people who score high in neuroticism — who are emotionally unstable or prone to anger.

Don't think negative traits will change over time, Tashiro wrote, because they are constant across a lifetime. Don't focus on irrelevant factors, like looks. Don't filter out or rationalize away negative information about a partner or relationship.

The second lens is the romantic lens. This is the dominant lens in movie and song. More than people in many other countries, Americans want to marry the person they are passionately in love with.

Their logic is that you need a few years of passionate love to fuse you together so you'll stay together when times get hard. It's a process beautifully described by a character in Louis de Bernières' novel "Corelli's Mandolin":

"Love itself is what is left over when being in love has burned away, and this is both an art and fortunate accident. Your mother and I had it. We had roots that grew toward each other underground, and when all the pretty blossoms had fallen from our branches we found that we

were one tree and not two."

In "The Good Marriage," Judith Wallerstein and Sandra Blakeslee concluded that 15 percent of couples maintain lifelong romantic marriages.

The third lens is the moral lens. In this lens a marriage doesn't exist just to exist or even just for procreation. It exists to serve some higher purpose, whether it is seeking God's kingdom for the religious or in service to some joint cause or humanity-enhancing project for the secular.

In "The Meaning of Marriage," Tim Keller argued that marriage introduces you

to yourself; you realize you're not as noble and easy to live with as you thought when alone. In many marriages there's an unspoken agreement not to talk about what you don't admire in the other, because the truth from a loved one can be so painful. But in a good marriage you identify your own selfishness and see it as the fundamental problem. You treat it more seriously than your spouse's selfishness.

The everyday tasks of marriage are opportunities to cultivate a more selfless love. Every day there's a chance to inspire and

The everyday tasks of marriage are opportunities to cultivate a more selfless love. There's a chance to inspire and encourage your partner.

encourage your partner to become his or her best self. In this lens, marriage isn't about two individuals trying to satisfy their own needs; it's a partnership of mutual self-giving for the purpose of moral growth and to make their corner of the world a little better.

It's probably best to use all three lenses when entering into or living in a marriage. But there are differences among them.

The psychological lens emphasizes that people don't change much over a lifetime. Especially after age 30, people may get a little more conscientious and agreeable, but improvements are modest.

In the romantic view, the heart is transformed by love, at any age. In the moral view, spiritual transformation — over a lifetime, not just over two passionate years — is the whole point. People have great power to go against their own natures and uplift their spouses, by showing a willingness to change, by supporting their journey from an old crippled self to a new more beautiful self.

The three lenses are operating at different levels: personality, emotions, the level of the virtues and the vices. The first two lenses are very common in our culture — in bookstores, songs and in movies. But the moral lens, with its view of marriage as a binding moral project, is less common. Maybe that's one of the reasons the quality of the average marriage is in decline.

David Brooks became a *New York Times* Op-Ed columnist in 2003.

## YOUR VIEWS

### Pendleton needs new ideas, renewed civic engagement

We are in the midst of new opportunities to make a difference in our future.

We have four seats open on the city council. We will also have a new mayor. We have visited some tough decisions that have divided this city. I believe it's time to rally our efforts and be proactive to make a difference.

Apathy is a disease that only provides a stagnant mindset and is a key ingredient for living in the past. I'm asking for folks to get involved, to put your name in the hat and help find solutions. The talent that is in the wings can only be discovered when you get involved. We do have the privilege to shape our future.

Let's move forward!

Paul Chalmers  
At-large council member/candidate  
Pendleton

### Politics as usual in Pendleton as council replaces Jane Hill

Jane Hill warned the council that trying to push through a gas tax on such short notice doomed it to failure, and in retrospect many voters would now rather have had the gas tax than the utility tax. So it was with great interest that I read the *East Oregonian* article on the selection process for Jane's replacement.

Evidently, if you are good friends with the current council members and a longtime government employee, that's the preferred selection criteria, and takes a page from "Politics As Usual 101." With the exception of the brief "executive session" to discuss their vote, transparency was pretty evident in the unanimous outcome of the council's vote and the message crystal clear: no change in sight.

Rick Rohde  
Pendleton

## LETTERS POLICY

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