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OUR VIEW

Roundabout way to a decision

In Hermiston, city government is going in circles about roundabouts. In Pendleton, they had their own colorful debate on Main Street statues.

Nothing like some local infrastructure and transportation issues to get the vox populi to rise a few decibels.

And that increase in civic discussion sure bubbled over in Hermiston earlier this week, though much of the response to a proposal to amend the city's transportation plan was one-sided. Message boards were lighting up with takedowns of roundabouts, the European-created intersection invention. There were a few defenders, but the vast majority wanted them nowhere near Hermiston's busy highway that is heavy on truck traffic.

To their credit, instead of just complaining about the issue, many went the required step further to put their name and concerns on the record, set some time aside to attend a city council meeting, and have their voices heard.

Nearly a half dozen people spoke out against an amendment to the

transportation plan would have added "or a roundabout" to the current recommendation for traffic signals to eventually be installed at multiple spots along Highway 395.

It may not sound like a lot — just three little words — but the feedback was strong enough that those words may be stricken from the plan, crashing any possible roundabout at those sites.

Whether or not that is a good thing is kind of beside the point. The people of Hermiston felt strongly about an issue, told their elected representatives about how they felt, and those representatives took that to heart.

The decision is now the Oregon Department of Transportation's, and they will not make it without having local voices ringing in their ears.

So, in a roundabout way, we get back to the point: If you have an opinion about something, make sure the people making the decisions know it, not just the people on your Facebook feed or within shouting distance. Your voice can make a difference, and can make your town a more straightforward place.

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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 VIEWS

Minimum wage increase will benefit Oregon workers

The (Coos Bay) World

As we first discussed last month, we think any adjustment to Oregon's minimum wage should be made by

the people we elect to make law. That happened this week as the House approved the Senate's bill and it now moves to Gov. Kate Brown's desk.

There has been the expected gnashing of teeth over the issue, mostly by special interest groups representing businesses that pay wages. The subject was raised here earlier this week when state economist Guy Tauer spoke to the Bay Area Chamber of Commerce. He was asked what he predicted the impact would be on rural communities like ours.

Mr. Tauer's educated response was that it's anyone's guess. "It's almost like this grand experiment that we're all kind of guinea pigs ..."

We like Mr. Tauer because he always speaks English, not economist-ese. If the answer is a fuzzy unknown, we need to hear that — in plain English.

What he made clear was that a wage increase impacts a lot of moving parts in any economy. Yes, it increases costs on businesses, and those businesses

have to figure out whether and how to absorb those costs, pass them along to customers or hire fewer employees.

But a wage increase also puts more money in the hands of employees, who then spend more on goods and services. A wage increase at the bottom of the scale could also have what he called a "trickle-up" effect, by putting pressure to increase wages in the tiers above the minimum.

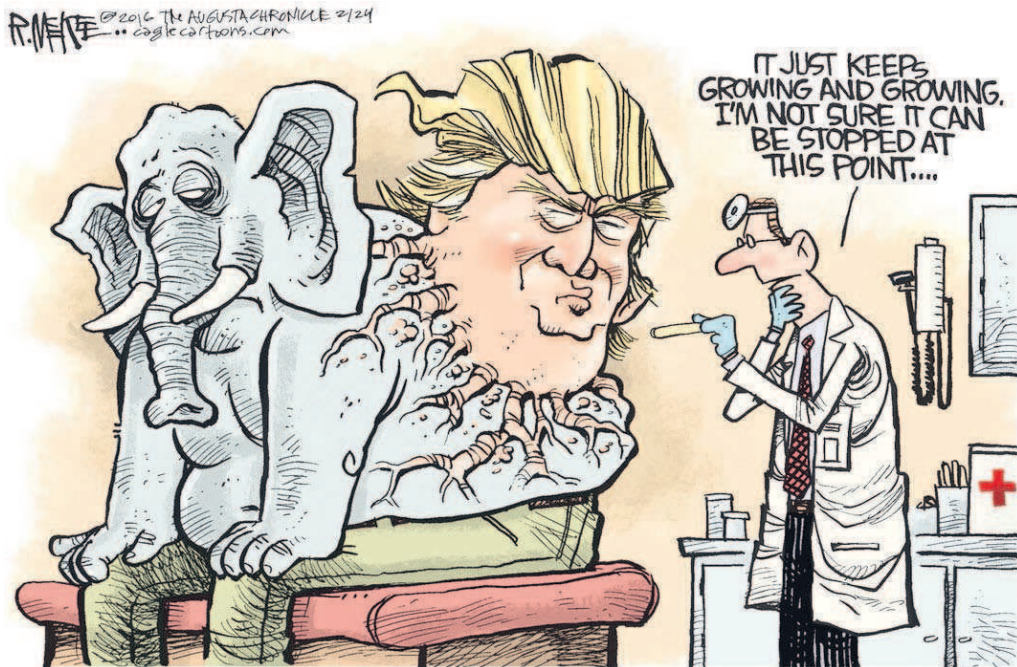
As we said — lots of moving parts that require finesse and thoughtful action.

We believe that some kind of wage increase was inevitable. So, we applaud the legislature's action to pass the tiered minimum wage structure that recognizes the differences between urban and rural economies. The initiatives that may still appear on the November ballot will ask voters to approve the same minimum wage increase for everyone across the state. That, in our opinion, would go too far.

Oregon will be national trailblazers in creating a tiered system, as stated in an Associated Press story earlier this week. With the alternative, we will simply be at the mercy of majority votes out of the I-5 corridor, and we can imagine what those voters will do to us.

Oregon will be trailblazers in creating a tiered minimum wage.

OTHER VIEWS



Why Trump voters accept the good with the bad

WALTERBORO, South Carolina — In a recent interview with Donald Trump, Fox News' Greta van Susteren posed a simple question from a viewer: "Why don't you act more presidential?"

"I will be changing very rapidly," answered Trump, fresh from his smashing victory in the New Hampshire primary. "I'm very capable of changing to anything I want to change to."

In South Carolina, where he won another important primary contest, Trump drew remarkable crowds; when a group called Lowcountry Sportsmen for Trump held an event for him early Wednesday evening at a remote and sprawling hunting area known as Dove Field, about an hour outside Charleston, 2,500 people turned out to see him, many driving an hour or more to a place that looked a little like the middle of nowhere.

Nearly everyone I talked to had decided to vote for Trump. Some had already voted. They were definitely on board. Still, after his sometimes flailing performance in last Saturday's contentious Republican debate in Greenville, many, like van Susteren's viewer, would like to see Trump act just a little more presidential.

Take, for example, Larry and Sherri Hoover, two newly retired State Department officials who live in Ridgefield. When I asked why they chose Trump over the other candidates, Larry said, "I feel like he tells the truth. He just tells it like it is." Sherri agreed.

I noted that some critics thought Trump went a little over the top at the debate. What did they think?

"I agreed with the premises of what he said, but he probably didn't need to say everything he said, to be honest with you," Larry answered.

"I thought that was a little bit much," Sherri added, mentioning Trump's comments about George W. Bush. "But he has no filter. He tells it like it is. That's what we like about him."

"I'm looking for a leader, a fighter, and a winner," said Bernie Bell, a retired Chamber of Commerce official from Charleston. "Here's what I thought about the debate: Trump was getting shot at from everywhere. I didn't agree with him on the part about George W. Bush, but I can understand why Trump did that. I'd like for him to be more presidential, I'd like for him to talk more about the issues. But when you're getting shot at from everywhere, you've got to respond."

"I wish he would be a little more southern in his genteel manner," Kathy Randall, a lawyer from Summerville who said she's likely to vote for Trump, said with a smile. "He needs some gentility, for sure — a big dose," added Randall's friend Hugh Merriman, an oncologist, who also intends to vote for Trump. "What is there to gain from bashing the Bushes? Jeb's done, I think. I don't see the benefit in that."

Even Trump's host and introducer, Ellie Thomas, a Mount Pleasant CPA who's with Lowcountry Sportsmen for Trump, took note of Trump's habit of taking things to the limit, and then a little beyond. "We say, 'You know, I don't know that I would have said that, but I'm sure glad he did,'" Thomas told the



BYRON YORK Comment

crowd. The Trump who took the stage — it was decked out with camouflage cloth and bales of hay — spoke as if he might have heard the advice. In a stump speech cut down to about half an hour because of a tight schedule, Trump said everything he normally says, but he appeared to have dialed back the intensity just a little. At the end, some people wished he had spoken longer, which rarely happens when Trump delivers his usual one-hour-plus performance.

Here's a theory. Trump's supporters believe the United States is at such a precarious point in its history that they want to elect a leader who will take an entirely different approach to government, not just from Barack Obama but also from the Bushes who monopolized Republican presidential politics for more than a generation.

"I think we need a stick of dynamite in Washington."

— Drake Donahue, South Carolina GOP voter

They're willing to put up with some excess because Trump seems to be the only man who might truly be able to break out of the old mold. Yes, they would like to see him polish things up a little. But even in his roughest state, he's worth it, given what's at stake.

On the other hand, Trump's manner has prevented him from taking advantage of the huge opportunity that

South Carolina presents to expand his base of support. When a candidate does something like win the New Hampshire primary by 20 points, people who aren't his supporters take another look at him. That moment is a chance to draw in new voters. After New Hampshire, Trump had that chance — big time — and the best opportunity for him to bring in those new voters was the Greenville debate. He didn't do it. It was another missed opportunity, like the debate he skipped in Des Moines.

One way to see that is not at Trump rallies, but at other candidates' events, where there are South Carolinians who have seriously considered supporting Trump but are now leaning elsewhere.

"Trump says what's in my heart," said one voter at a Ted Cruz event in Columbia last Tuesday. But after the debate, the man said, "My head says no." Off the record, casual talks with other Republican voters around South Carolina suggest that he is not alone. They appreciate Trump and are glad someone is saying what he is saying about immigration and other issues — but they just can't bring themselves to support him.

Back at Dove Field, though, voters were willing to take the bad with the good in the hope that Trump will bring real change to American politics.

"That's Trump," said Tim Fensch, of Walterboro. "He's like everybody I've ever met from New York City. They're all like that. They get in your face, they're blunt, if you come at them, they double down on you. I mean, that's him."

"I want to make a statement," said Charles Perkins Dube II, of Savannah, Georgia. "I like what he has to say."

"I think we need a stick of dynamite in Washington," said Drake Donahue, of Goose Creek. "I think he's it."

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.

YOUR VIEWS

Oregon politicians should support medical marijuana

Marijuana (cannabis) is a medicine. Edibles, tinctures, creams and oils are potent medicines and should be recommended by a physician who understands their properties and side effects.

Allowing a person to get anything they want at a dispensary is the same as allowing them to go to a pharmacy and get medicine without seeing a doctor or a pharmacist.

Our bodies, just like the cannabis plant, make cannabinoids (major ingredients) and we have receptors for them everywhere including the brain, blood system, liver, lungs, ovaries, kidneys, etc. The cannabinoids in marijuana are very therapeutic.

Getting high is a side effect of cannabis. Historically it was used by the plant to protect itself from animals that liked to eat its leaves but would go to sleep when intoxicated. Most of my patients do not like to get high

and have learned to adjust the dose so that the psychoactive effects are minimal. They use marijuana because of its remarkable medicinal properties (research-based — pain, nausea, appetite, seizures, anxiety, depression, Alzheimer's DX, neuropathies, PTSD, cancer).

Like all medicines marijuana can be dangerous for patients who have not been educated in its appropriate use and have not seen a physician.

Politicians have a moral and legal obligation to protect the citizens of Oregon.

Please use your God-given privilege of serving others to promote what is right and honorable. Keep medical marijuana as a separate entity and do not legalize the purchase of edibles, tinctures, creams, and oils without a doctor's recommendation.

Do not cater to those who think that money is more important than human lives.

Also, please save our small farmers.

Judy Emanuel Ashland



LETTERS POLICY

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