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**OUR VIEW**

# Transparency loses with Gov. Brown

Who owns government information — citizens, or the public employees our taxes pay to produce it?

Oregon continues to struggle with this issue, as our Capital Bureau reporters explored in a Tuesday story about the waning drive for transparency reforms in the state capital.

Gov. Kate Brown succeeded in some small efforts directed at situations arising from the Kitzhaber/Hayes scandal. But more meaningful improvements have died on the vine.

A legislative leader told our reporters that a key reform stalled this year because city and county governments opposed deadlines and fee limits in the bill.

It is always possible to find examples of gadflies stretching open-records laws by making overly broad or burdensome requests. However, the American system of government deliberately vests the news media and citizen activists with a large

role in making certain the public knows what civil servants are doing and saying. Inconvenience and expense are never valid excuses when an agency fails to live up to fundamental expectations.

The rise of email — and a trend of government employees and elected leaders using personal accounts to conduct what is supposed to be public business — makes it particularly important that transparency laws keep up with changing technology. It is reasonable to require officials to promptly submit such emails for official archiving.

Beyond the issue of government documents in all formats, some public entities in Oregon routinely shut the press and public out of meetings, or fail to publicize them. This is never acceptable.

Oregon prides itself on strong adherence to democratic principles. Our leaders must do much better at living up to these aspirations.

**The rise of email makes it particularly important that transparency laws keep up with changing technology.**

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.

**YOUR VIEWS**

## Local gas taxes won't work in Eastern Oregon

It seems that some of our council candidates are in favor of a gas tax. No city in Eastern Oregon has a gas tax. Even our democratic governor knows there is a great difference between eastern and western Oregon. The difference between the minimum wage in eastern and western Oregon is a good example.

The only way a gas tax will work is statewide. The voters of Pendleton answered this question last fall. The gas tax failed in Pendleton and also in Bend. We are in competition with other cities in Eastern Oregon for business and industry. Let's not make Pendleton less competitive than it already is.

Ask your council candidate what their position is on gas tax, fee increases, and other taxes. My position is no gas tax, no fee increases, no tax increases until we have an efficiency expert look at all city operations. Maybe we can let the taxpayers keep some of their own money.

**Rex J. Morehouse**  
Pendleton

from their neighbor's yard when their neighbor was hospitalized.

Our justice system needs judges who are of good character, impartial, fair-minded and good listeners.

Our community and justice system needs Jon Lieuallen.

**Judith Pompili**  
Portland

## Athena-Weston schools have golden opportunity

The Athena-Weston School District has a remarkable opportunity to make improvements to its school facilities at a fraction of what it might normally cost. That's because the state of Oregon has agreed to provide a \$4 million matching grant if the citizens of the district vote in favor of a bond issue to provide the matching funds.

Having been involved with the school district in a variety of ways over the past 17 years, I am well familiar with the school facilities and the needs of the district. While district staff has worked hard to do what they can to be good stewards of the facilities, there are needs which are simply beyond their capacity.

The projects that are included in this funding proposal are not glitzy, but rather the kind of improvements necessary to insure the buildings will be serviceable for years to come. Projects like roofing, modernization of energy systems, flooring, more efficient windows, safety and security enhancements, modern buses, better lighting, and technology will be wise investments that prolong the life of the buildings and equipment and contribute to a workable education setting.

It has been my experience working with both the schools and the Athena and Weston communities that the residents demand value from their tax dollars and that they hold public officials accountable for wise use of those resources.

The bond issue proposed for the Athena-Weston School District — with generous support from the state of Oregon — meets that test of value and I am hopeful the citizens of both communities will respond with a positive vote of support.

**George Murdock, chair**  
Umatilla County Board of Commissioners

## Lieuallen the choice for circuit court judge

On May 17 I encourage you to vote Jon Lieuallen Circuit Court Judge.

I have known Jon Lieuallen for 20 years. He is an honest, hardworking, knowledgeable, impartial, conscientious, caring man who serves his community well, both on the job and off.

Jon is a devoted and loving husband and father to his wife and four children. Jon believes in everyone working together to get things accomplished.

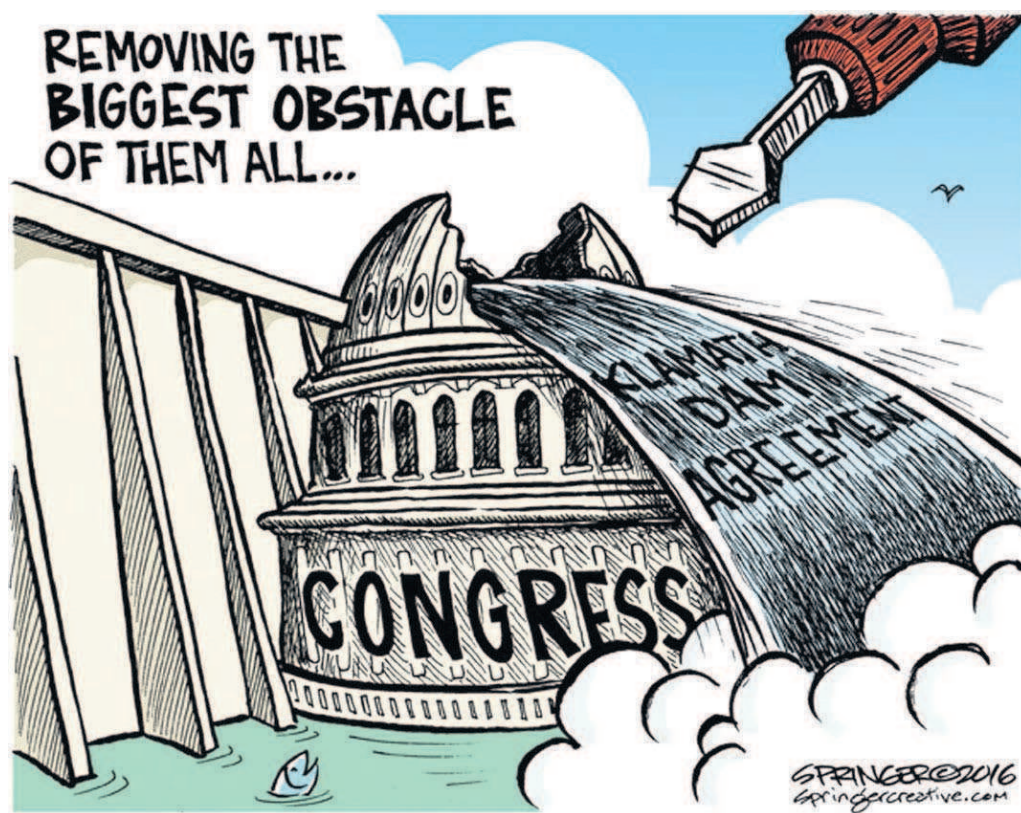
At home his four children are all assigned chores to help keep their home running smoothly. Taking out the garbage, feeding pets, mowing the lawn and emptying the dishwasher are the responsibilities of Jon's children.

Jon takes pride in the accomplishments of his children. He supports them and participates in their various school and sports activities and dance recitals.

The family is also known to lend a helping hand to their neighbors. This past fall the family raked leaves

**Be heard!**

Comment online at [eastoregonian.com](http://eastoregonian.com)



**OTHER VIEWS**

# The Lincoln caucus

The Republican presidential campaign just changed. Until now this has been a candidate-centric process. All the different candidates were competing to get a majority of delegates to the GOP convention. But now it's likely no candidate will get that majority on the first ballot.

So the campaign has become a delegate-centric process. Suddenly the delegates have all the power and the candidates have to woo them for their support. The crucial question is: How are delegates going to use their power?

Well, they could go the solitary path. In this model the delegates give away their support one by one.

But they'd get nothing for it in return — except maybe a hug from Ivanka Trump or a Ted Cruz coffee mug. Big whoop.

Or they could choose the collective path.

This is the path that recognizes that the situation we're in now is more like a parliamentary process than a presidential process. Even very small groups can have an amazing influence over big candidates who are trying to build a majority coalition. Think of the way small Israeli religious parties extract concessions from the much larger Israeli parties.

So I'm suggesting some number of delegates organize themselves into a caucus called the Lincoln Caucus. The Lincoln Caucus would not be an explicitly anti-Trump caucus or an anti-Cruz caucus. It would just be a caucus made up of delegates who are not happy with the choices currently before them.

The evidence suggests that there will be a lot of these delegates. Only 10 percent of the delegates are named by the presidential campaigns. The vast majority, still to be chosen, will be local activists or state legislators.

If they have a chance on a second or third ballot, many of them will love to vote against Donald Trump. By July, many of them, I suspect, will be less satisfied with Cruz than they are today — after he gets crushed in a bunch of big primaries and gets bloodied in the Trump-Cruz civil war.

I'm suggesting that the delegates who signed up to be members of the Lincoln Caucus make a pledge to work and vote together at the convention.

The first thing the Lincoln Caucus would do is plant a flag for a different style of Republicanism. Members of the caucus would remind the country that there still are Republicans who believe in prudent globalism, reform conservative ideas to lift up the working class. There are still Republicans who believe in certain standards of polite behavior in public and pragmatic compromise.



**DAVID BROOKS**  
Comment

If the Republican ticket gets devastated in November, members of the Lincoln Caucus could say, "We stood for something different," and they'd be in a good position to lead the rebuilding process.

But the Lincoln Caucus would primarily serve more immediate ends.

First, the Lincoln Caucus would work with the rules committee to get rid of any party bylaws that inhibit delegate flexibility at the convention.

Second, it would tell the Trump and Cruz campaigns this: After the second ballot, we will entertain offers for our support. You may offer us policy pledges, personnel positions or anything you think will win our favor.

**If modern conservatives don't stand together, they will surely hang separately.**

After the offers were in, members of the Lincoln Caucus would hold a public vote. They could vote for the Trump offer, for the Cruz offer or for some as yet unknown third candidate. If most of the Lincoln Caucus votes went for the third option, then that person would be the caucus candidate in the ensuing convention ballots.

This process would bring the Trump and Cruz campaigns back toward the Republican mainstream. It would create a road toward party unity after one deal or another was reached. It might go some way toward heading off a general election debacle.

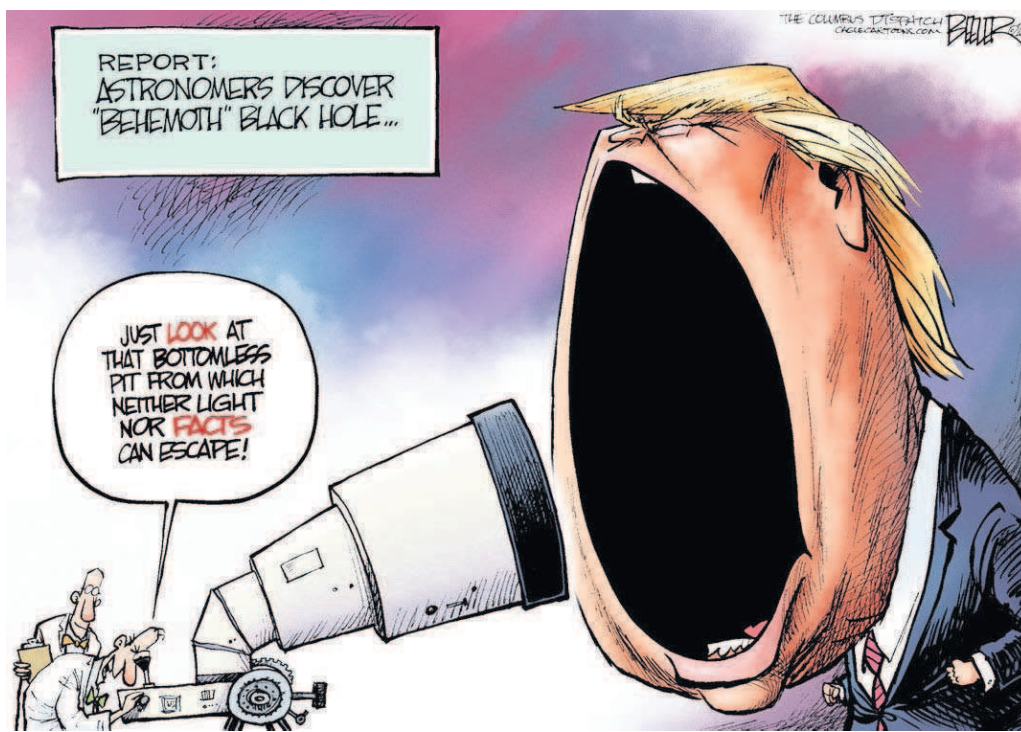
It would also create a democratic path toward a Republican nominee who is not Trump or Cruz. Remember, the members of the caucus would be delegates, not Washington insiders. They would be a committeeman from Missouri or a state rep from Ohio. They'd be tied to the grass roots, and the press would be all over these people at the convention. This is the best way to get a non-Trump/Cruz candidate without sparking riots in the streets.

Mostly, members of the Lincoln Caucus would stand up for the legitimate rights of the party. In our republican system, it is parties that choose nominees; not primary voters. Parties are lasting institutions that manage coalitions, preserve historical commitments, protect us from flash-in-the-pan demagogues and impose restraints on the excessively ambitious. The Lincoln Caucus would embody these legitimate institutional responsibilities.

It's impossible to tell where this process is heading. It would be nice to have a pre-organized faction, standing up for pragmatic, reform conservative ideas, ready for whatever may come.

If modern conservatives don't stand together, they will surely hang separately.

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



**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](mailto:editor@eastoregonian.com).