

## BOARDMAN

## Walden addresses concerns during town hall

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

Proposed legislation that could help police track kidnapping victims faster was one of the bills Republican Congressman Greg Walden discussed during a town hall meeting in Boardman on Tuesday.

Walden, chair of the Energy and Commerce subcommittee on communications and technology, said he supported the Kelsey Smith Law, named after a teenage girl who was kidnapped in a Target parking lot in Kansas. It took four days to find her body after Verizon refused to turn over her cell phone's location data. The law named after her would compel companies to turn over the location of a phone to police in situations where there is an imminent risk of harm or death.

"It's a tragic situation," Walden said.

Other things Walden discussed during the town hall include:

- Another communications bill is named after Kari Hunt Dunn, who was stabbed to death by her ex-husband in a hotel bathroom. Her nine-year-old daughter tried to call 9-1-1 repeatedly in the next room but didn't realize she had to dial 9 first. Kari's Law would require all phone systems to be able to call 9-1-1 without dialing any other numbers first.

- In response to a question about whether the Senate should hold confirmation hearings for Supreme Court nominees Merrick Garland before the presidential election, Walden said he was in the House of Representatives, not the Senate, but he did think the Senate should hold a hearing.

- Several attendees

complained that the city of Boardman had not been able to add ballfields and other recreational opportunities to the waterfront property owned by the Corp of Engineers because the Bureau of Indian Affairs had the right of first refusal on leasing the land, but had not given the Corp or the city an answer over the course of several years. Walden agreed with them that there should be a deadline imposed on the Bureau, and asked for follow-up information to be sent to him to look into the situation further.

- Morrow County Judge Terry Tallman was honored by Walden for his "many years of leadership and wise council." Tallman is Morrow County's longest-serving judge at 18 years, and also its last as the county moves to a part-time county commissioner system.

- Tallman said Oregon's

Coordinated Care Organizations have been "very, very successful" in helping improve health outcomes in Morrow County, particularly in bringing counselors and nurses into the schools, and worried what would happen to them now that the \$2 billion in federal money funding them has been spent. Walden said if Medicaid money was like winning the lottery, Oregon had chosen to take the lump sum instead of the annual payouts and couldn't expect to go back and ask for more money after spending the entire lump sum. State Rep. Greg Smith, also in attendance, agreed with Walden that continued funding of the CCOs in the future was a problem that would need to be figured out on the state level.

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## DEPOT: Transfer pushed back to May 2017

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pieces of the former Umatilla Chemical Depot.

The jobs those investments promise to bring to the region can't take shape, however, until the depot land is transferred from the U.S. Army to the locally controlled Columbia Development Authority. The land was expected to return to local control in early 2015, but the Army's Base Realignment and Closure office has now pushed that timeline back to May 2017.

Walden and his staff have been working with local leaders to see what can be done to help speed up that process, and on Tuesday those leaders gave the congressman a tour of the depot, emphasizing all the way how critical it was that federal bureaucracy did not continue to be a barrier.

Greg Smith, executive director of the Columbia Development Authority, said the phone in his office is ringing all the time with people interested building on the depot land.

Just the three separate solar projects, proposed by different companies on different sections of the land, would represent a total of up to \$750 million in investment.

"What's going to end up happening, if we don't get this going, is enthusiasm is going to wane," Smith said.



Staff photo E.J. Harris

**Congressman Greg Walden, center, gestures while asking a question while on a tour of the Umatilla Army Depot with the Columbia Development Authority on Tuesday west of Hermiston.**

As the group stood on the eastern edge of the depot, looking at what Smith called some of the best industrial land in Oregon, Port of Umatilla Director Kim Puzey pointed out the FedEx facility and ConAgra plant that could be seen on the other side of Interstate 82. If Walden wanted to know what the blank expanse of sagebrush will likely look like after the land is transferred to local control, Puzey said, "Just look across the street."

Smith said he was hired to develop land, not transfer it, but a year later he's still navigating the Columbia Development Authority through negotiations with the federal government.

The latest sticking point has centered around water.

The Oregon National Guard will use 7,500 acres of the depot land for training facilities, and the Pentagon wants to make sure it has plenty of water at its disposal. A study commissioned by the National Guard said they needed about 15 percent of the water available onsite, but current negotiations give them about 37 percent.

Oregon Military Department Deputy Director Dave Stuckey said they want to be a good partner, but they also recognize that they are liable for fire suppression on their land and want to make sure enough water is available for those purposes.

He said he thinks there are "just a couple of small sticking points" on the water negotiations left to address. Stuckey also said that the

## DONNELLY: In her 15th year of teaching

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physical education. She said her biggest challenge is convincing students to be active and be excited about it. Donnelly works hard to find activities students will enjoy and carry with them.

"A lot of people think it's the 'roll out the ball' type thing and there's no learning going on," she said. "These kids are learning skills and tactics and applying them. There are cognitive pieces going on, and there is an academic piece. It is physical education. They are learning."

Donnelly teaches about 150 students a day across six physical education classes: the adaptive class, three classes for sixth-graders, one for eighth-graders and one for a combination of seventh-graders and eighth-graders. In each class, students learn the basics of sports and other activities as well as problem solving, coordination and teamwork.

Now in her 15th year of teaching — including 11 years at Sunridge — Donnelly continues to love her job. Donnelly said middle school students have a unique energy and willingness to try new things that drew her toward the age group.

When in training, she worked with students at all levels — elementary, middle school and high school — and latched on to the excitement and potential of middle school.

Being the only female among Sunridge's four P.E. teachers means Donnelly also supervises the girls locker room, where most of her plan-

ning takes place. In her down time between classes, she said she is always looking for ways to tweak her programs so students get the most out of them. Donnelly's main goal in each of her classes is for students to learn and discover new ways of being active to become lifelong healthy adults.

"I'm very passionate about what I teach and my curriculum. I'm not going to just sit back and take the easy road," she said. "I want my students to be fulfilled and to take something with them."

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## Where would you go if you died today?

## WHAT GOD SAYS:

**1. You have sinned against God:** "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

**2. There is a penalty for your sin:** "For the wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23a) "And Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death." (Revelation 20:14)

**3. Jesus Christ paid your penalty:** "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8) "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures...He was buried, and...He rose again the third day..." (I Corinthians 15:3-4)

**4. Now He offers you a free gift:** "But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23b)

**\*You Cannot Earn That Gift:** "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us..." (Titus 3:5) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God..." (Ephesians 2:8)

## WHAT YOU MUST DO:

**You must accept God's gift. HOW?**

**1. You Must REPENT** (agree with God that you are a sinner and need to be saved). "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3)

**2. You Must TRUST IN CHRIST** "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him (Jesus) from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Romans 10:9) "For whosoever shall CALL upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:13)

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## PGG: Members won't see any dividends returned to them for three to six years

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from last year's harvest to maintain their investments, but came nowhere close to meeting that goal.

On the other hand, neighboring Morrow County Grain Growers earned a profit of \$321,315 last year, with \$207,584 in patronage and equity paid to members. Northwest Grain Growers, based in Walla Walla, also made \$4.4 million for the year ending April 30, 2015.

At Monday's meeting, the PGG board recommended dissolving, which allows the co-op to put its profitable divisions up for sale. By selling off businesses like the grain division, energy and Precision Rain irrigation subsidiary, the board wants to ensure those services remain intact under new ownership. PGG currently has 67 employees, most of which Jacobson said would at least be offered the chance to keep their jobs.

"These are all profitable businesses," said Jacobson, who was hired at PGG in 2012. "We'll get those sold."

The first order of business, Jacobson said, is to close the deal with United Grain Corporation, an outfit owned by the Mitsui Group of Japan. United Grain has traditionally been one of the West Coast's top exporters, and is now expanding its reach to work directly with farmers.

Tony Flagg, vice president of business development, said he couldn't discuss terms of a deal with PGG, but is looking forward to establishing roots in the region.

"We want to do business with producers, not middlemen," Flagg said. "We think it's better for both."

Meanwhile, PGG

members won't see any dividends returned to them for possibly three to six years. Some, like Eric Anderson, have doubts whether they'll see any money at all.

Anderson, who's been a member of the co-op for 40 years, described the mood at Monday's meeting as one of resignation. He said he and his wife have \$36,000 worth of lost dividends from PGG, and they're far from the only ones. Missing those payments is especially difficult for seniors, Anderson said, who have counted on that income.

"These directors took it from their neighbors," Anderson said. "It's their neighbors' money."

As for seeing any equity returned, Anderson said it's a steep climb for a co-op that still has pension obligations, environmental liabilities and a \$15 million loan from CoBank left to pay back.

"I resent that the board misleads members and the East Oregonian to believe there will be a significant amount of money," Anderson said. "I hope there will be significant recovery. But they've not given me much incentive (to believe)."

Jacobson said CoBank has not called on PGG's loan and has been supportive through the process. He understands some people are angry, but that "it serves no purpose to find a scapegoat." Jacobson also defended the board, saying they've been transparent reporting what they knew about the co-op's finances.

Jacobson said he has an idea of how much equity will be returned to members, but would not specify.

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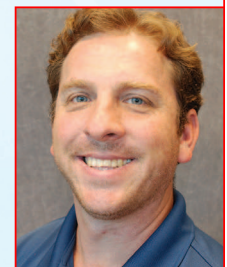
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