

EAST OREGONIAN
Founded October 16, 1875

KATHRYN B. BROWN Publisher
DANIEL WATTENBURGER Managing Editor
TIM TRAINOR Opinion Page Editor
MARISSA WILLIAMS Regional Advertising Director
MARCY ROSENBERG Circulation Manager
JANNA HEIMGARTNER Business Office Manager
MIKE JENSEN Production Manager

OUR VIEW

Marijuana means money for local government

Oregon's experiment in legalizing marijuana has been an unmitigated success, and local voters should allow their municipality to participate in a growing industry.

According to the Department of Revenue release from earlier this week, the state has already overseen more than \$160 million is marijuana sales that have brought in \$40.2 million in tax money.

Yet many of those dollars won't reach us here in northeast Oregon, because every municipality opted out instead of cashing in when they banned both marijuana retail sale and commercial growth. Governments that did so include Umatilla and Morrow counties and each and every city in those counties.

It has been a costly error.

Just using the nine month numbers, the decision by Umatilla County commissioners has already kept about \$120,000 from going to its law enforcement department. That doesn't even take into consideration an additional 3 percent local tax that could be instituted, were a dispensary to open with county limits.

Even a small town like Pendleton would be staring at a roughly \$26,000 check — not enough to pave the streets in gold, but if it instituted its own local tax it could at least pave a few potholes.

These municipalities better have a darn good reason to turn down good money — but we can't find one.

The dire warnings about the effects of marijuana legalization have not come true. There have been zero deaths, few serious injuries (those to people making hash oil, not users) no rise in crime, no cultural degradation — no nothing.

The fact is that \$160 million of marijuana that would have been sold in Oregon by cartels and local drug dealers was sold over the counter, the state taking its cut with each and every purchase. In addition, those businesses are paying employees, who are in turn paying income taxes, which in turn is fueling the economic engine.

City councils in Pendleton, Hermiston and Milton-Freewater each have the ability to right their council's wrong by overturning their local ban. Representatives of other cities and both Morrow and Umatilla counties didn't think enough of their constituents to even give them the option.

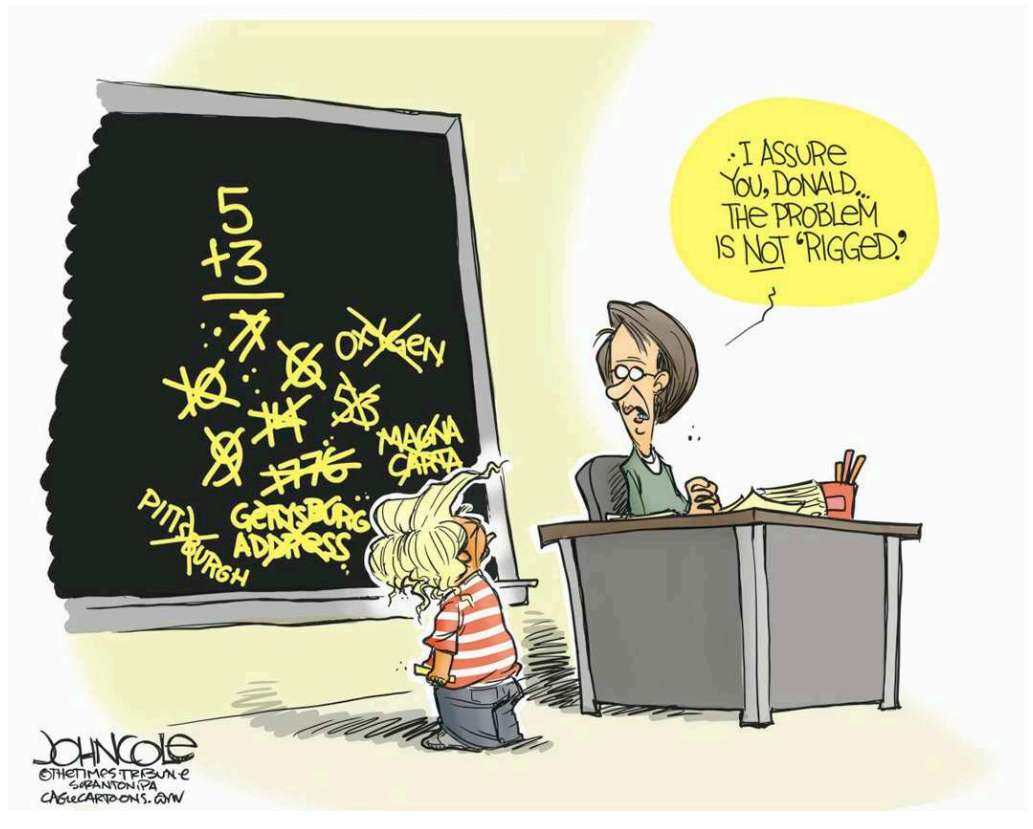
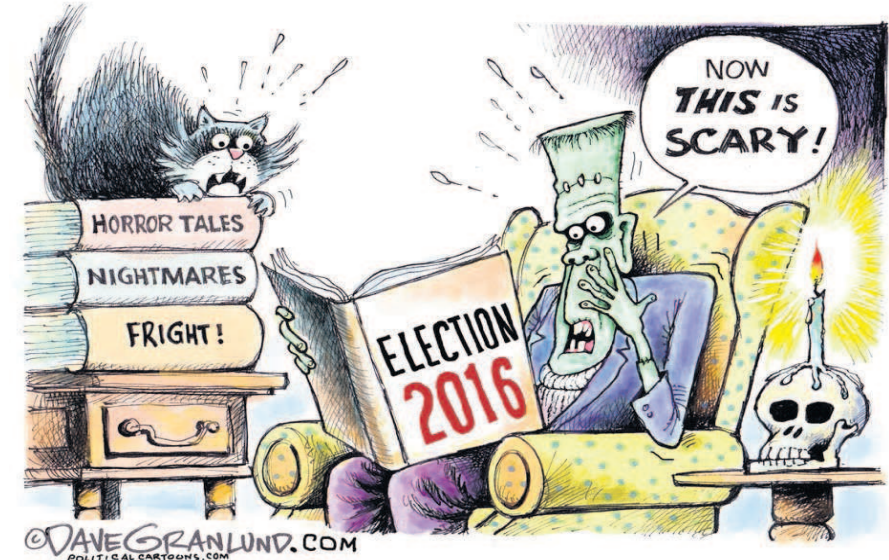
Rural Oregon cannot continue to complain about the lack of economic advantages when we don't pick up a successful business opportunity when it is laid at our feet. Marijuana might not be your cup of tea, but allowing and regulating its sale is the best way to have more control over it and fund support services at the same time. Also, it allows medical users easier access to what makes them feel better.

Still, no matter what voters decide in November, we should remind readers that possessing and using marijuana remains legal for adults everywhere in Oregon, as is growing it for personal use. The only thing a ban does is keep local governments from seeing any benefits.

Voters have a choice: If they want Eastern Oregon to have a business friendly atmosphere, to increase its tax base and bring in jobs, then marijuana businesses — both recreational and medical — can be a solution. A ban just continues an age-old problem that will never get better.

Umatilla County could have collected \$120,000 for law enforcement.

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

Clinton promises major wealth redistribution

Even by the standards of liberal Democrats, Hillary Clinton is running the most frankly redistributionist presidential campaign in years. She promises massive new spending initiatives and balanced budgets, achieved by raising taxes on higher-income Americans in ways that other Democrats have rejected in the recent past.

At a fundraiser in Seattle Friday night — with her growing lead over Donald Trump, Clinton holds few actual campaign rallies — Clinton described her spending agenda: the “biggest investment in jobs since World War II,” higher spending on prescription drugs, billions more for Obamacare, pre-school, family leave, college affordability, roads, bridges, tunnels, ports, airports, a new electric grid to “distribute all the clean, renewable energy we’re going to be producing,” half a billion new solar panels, advanced manufacturing, climate change, and more.

Clinton conceded that was a lot to pay for, but argued America's wealthy have more than enough cash to hand over to the government. Chief among them, Clinton said, is her billionaire opponent, Donald Trump, whom she promises to target after the election.

“When people ask me, so how are you going to pay for infrastructure jobs and paid family leave, I say well, I’m telling you I’m going to pay for everything,” Clinton told the fundraiser audience. “I’m not going to add a penny to the national debt. We’re going to go where the money is. We’re going to make the wealthy pay their fair share. And we’re going to finally close those corporate loopholes. And it would be a good idea to start with my opponent.”

It's not clear whether Clinton meant there might be some specific retaliation against Trump under her administration or whether Trump would simply pay more taxes along with other wealthy Americans.

Clinton often uses the phrase “go where the money is” to describe her tax-raising proposals. (The phrase comes from a legendary 20th Century criminal, Willie Sutton, who was asked why he robbed banks and supposedly replied, “Because that’s where the money is.”)

Clinton used the phrase at three separate rallies last month, as well as over the summer when she was asked on CBS’s “60 Minutes” what the term “middle class” means to her. “Well, we say below \$250,000 because here’s what we want to do,” Clinton said. “We want to go where the money is. Most of the wealth increase, the increase in income, both active and passive, has gone to the very top of the income scale.”

Of course, \$250,000 per year, while more than the vast majority of American households make, is also not the “very top of the income scale.” A household bringing in that amount would be in the top 3 percent of American earners nationwide. In some areas of the country, like Secretary Clinton’s home, the New York metropolitan area, it would be in the top 5 percent. In any event, Clinton’s precise



BYRON YORK
Comment

figure, \$250,000, is one that has given Democrats fits in their previous efforts to raise taxes.

In 2008, candidate Barack Obama pledged to raise taxes on couples making more than \$250,000 a year and individuals making more than \$200,000. The idea was that in 2010, when the Bush tax cuts on all U.S. earners were set to expire, taxes on the wealthiest would go up.

It didn't happen. By the time the Bush cuts expired, Obama had already raised taxes on higher earners through Obamacare, and some key Democrats joined Republicans in opposing another hike. Clinton's old New York colleague in the Senate, Charles Schumer, and the Democratic leader in the House, Nancy Pelosi, proposed to raise taxes only on households above \$1 million. With the economy still in a terrible trough in late 2010, Congress declined to raise taxes on anybody.

In 2012, Obama came back, with a proposal to further extend the great majority of the Bush cuts but again to raise taxes on families with income above \$250,000. Schumer and a bunch of other Democrats facing re-election balked. Obama compromised, and the final deal raised taxes on families making more than \$450,000.

Now Clinton, with an eye on her left flank after a primary fight with Bernie Sanders, proposes to go back to the old \$250,000 threshold for tax increases. Whether that will succeed is anybody's guess; on the other side of the Democratic divide will again be Schumer, this time leading the party in the Senate, either as minority or majority leader.

Even if all Democrats agree to “go where the money is,” it seems unlikely they'll be able to agree on precisely how to do it.

At about this time in the 2008 campaign, Barack Obama had a brief encounter with an Ohio man named Joseph Wurzelbacher, who later became known as Joe the Plumber. “Your new tax plan is going to tax me more, isn't it?” Joe asked the Democratic candidate at a stop in Holland, Ohio.

“It's not that I want to punish your success, I just want to make sure that everybody who is behind you, that they've got a chance for success, too,” Obama answered. “I think when you spread the wealth around, it's good for everybody.”

For Republicans, Joe the Plumber became the embodiment of opposition to Obama's redistributionist plans. But Obama back then was vastly more subtle than Clinton is today; rhetorically, “We're going to go where the money is” is a hard-edged threat compared to “spread the wealth around.”

Clinton doesn't need subtlety. With the political world fixated on all things Trump, she could resurrect Willie Sutton himself, and threaten to sic him on everyday Americans, and it's possible nobody would notice. Clinton is being blunt about her intentions because she can.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.

YOUR VIEWS

Sheriff Rowan makes the tough decisions

For 15 years I managed an Oregon State Emergency Management Program out of Pendleton and worked directly with local law enforcement leaders in both Umatilla and Morrow counties.

In my opinion, Sheriff Terry Rowan has always been honest and transparent in communicating with the citizens of Umatilla County. He will tell the truth about what happened, even though the truth is not always popular. He is not afraid of conflict and doesn't avoid meeting with members of the community, even when they have issues with local law enforcement.

His ability to communicate and address those controversial issues publicly is why you elected him and why we need to keep him in office. He does not (and will not) avoid making tough decisions when

necessary. I also believe that he is not willing to compromise his principles just to get re-elected!

Finally, Sheriff Rowan is the type of sheriff we need at a time in our country when domestic policing is being challenged by controversy and civil unrest.

As an elected official, he knows that public support is what got him elected and public support is needed to keep him in office. Therefore, I urge the citizens of Umatilla County to vote once again for your current sheriff, Terry Rowan.

Chris Brown Heppner

Lehnert will answer the call as sheriff

As the wife of a career law enforcement officer, a mother of three children, an educated working professional and resident of Umatilla County, I have various lenses through which to see

the world. I have the privilege (and sometimes the burden) of supporting my husband as he works some of the most heartbreaking and violent crimes in our county. It is tense and there is stress and fear: stress on law enforcement to make the “perfect” choice every time, even at the risk of their own safety; fear that our children are safe; and fear in OUR county that when you call for help in your most desperate hour, help will not come.

Ryan Lehnert and my husband, Robert Guerrero, entered this race because they see a growing lack of confidence in leadership at UCSO. They observe first-hand the erosion of relationships affecting the service we receive through simple things such as the sheriff's failure to attend interagency meetings, workshops and local advisory committees.

He boasts that having a seat at the table is important. That seat is only important when it is filled.

Through this process, we cannot lose sight of neighbors like Jim Williams, whose daughter has left our community because she was scared. She was scared for her life on a desolate county road near a place she used to call home. Mr. Williams shared his powerful testimony at the candidate forum Oct. 14, where he explained he had lost confidence in the UCSO, as he made multiple attempts to contact them, including Sheriff Rowan, and received no response. Sheriff Rowan dutifully apologized, saying, “I would just have to sincerely apologize and look at the more global things that we have been able to accomplish in just a short amount of time.” What is more “global” than safety and security?

This theme is not new. Sheriff Rowan has been working on what he generally referred to as “lack of response” since his 2012 campaign. He has been in leadership at the

UCSO since 2005. If he has not successfully remedied this in his 11 years, he cannot and will not.

I support a candidate that will address the more “global” things: ensuring a system that never allows for a call for help to go unanswered so that no one in our community — neighbor, friend or family member — is left helpless in their most desperate hour.

Christa Guerrero, Hermiston

Benghazi deaths preclude Clinton

“What difference, at this point, does it make?” — Hillary Clinton, Jan. 23, 2013.

Here are four reasons why Hillary Clinton shouldn't be elected president: Ambassador Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Glen Doherty and Tyrone Woods.

Hillary lied after these four Americans died.

Renee Dick, Salem