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OUR VIEW

You can't save daylight

Last weekend we “sprang forward,” swapping an hour of rest for an hour of evening light. The precise details of that magical transaction, however, are still fuzzy to our sleep-deprived brains.

It's the beginning of Daylight Saving Time, a human manipulation of the clocks and, in 2017, an outmoded and unnecessary action.

If you, too, have been unreasonably tired the last few days, you can probably blame it on the changeover.

A little history: The first organized effort to tamper with time to give people a little more daylight was in 1908 in Canada. It made its way to the U.S. a few years later, was embraced in some of our bigger cities and taken national in 1942. Tinkering continues to this day.

The goal at its inception was partly to conserve energy, but experts are split if it has any effect at all, and some argue it actually has a negative effect. This includes the fact that there are more automobile deaths in the days after springing forward.

Pop science's favorite spokesman, Neil deGrasse Tyson, summarized the silliness of DST on Sunday on his Twitter feed:

“What would aliens say if told that Earthlings shift clocks by an hour to fool themselves into thinking there's

more sunlight?” he wrote.

We're the ones being fooled, and after decades of expanding Daylight Saving Time, the tide of the public is turning against the practice. Bills have been put forth in more than a dozen state legislatures ordering their respective states to no longer follow Daylight Saving Time, or push back

the changeover until later in the year.

(Until 2005, the spring forward used to take place in late April but it has been steadily moving forward until, this year, when it went into effect in early March.)

In reality, we should do away with it completely. Human biochemistry changes naturally with the seasons

Human biochemistry changes naturally with the seasons and we don't need to artificially manipulate time to enjoy summer or survive winter.

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And there's good news: If you like your daylight, you can keep your daylight. The same amount exists regardless of what your watch says.

So beyond the minor inconvenience of changing each of the clocks in your life twice a year and being robbed of a precious weekend hour each spring (only to be repaid — without interest — in the fall), keeping a routine just because it's a routine is silly.

And we wouldn't want aliens laughing at us.

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

Repeal health bill forgets the rural elderly

As a psychologist who came frequently to Pendleton, I saw many people whose lives were seriously disrupted by lack of health care. The Affordable Care Act gave many such people hope.

Greg Walden is central in crafting the proposed health insurance bill in the House that will radically change the ACA. This bill will have a serious effect on many of his constituents. In 2016 over 29,000 people in this congressional district received their health care through the ACA Marketplace, and 105,000 people received health care through expanded Medicaid. For many of these people, insurance will not be available under Walden's bill.

The most extreme instances are frightening. According to Kaiser Family Foundation data, a 64-year-old living on \$25,000 income a year in Pendleton will pay almost \$8,100 more each year in insurance premiums than they do now under the ACA.

This bill has tax cuts, but no one making less than \$100,000 will see a penny of this money. Those who benefit the most are millionaires, who will get an average of \$54,130 in tax cuts a year.

Obamacare needs to be fixed. But this plan will hurt too many of the people who Greg Walden represents, especially those who are most vulnerable. Representative Walden, please don't forget these people.

Dr. Carol Greenough Tualatin

modest estimate given the greater than expected growth in student enrollment over the last ten years. (It is my understanding that student enrollment has exceeded the estimated student population growth by this same university over the last ten years.)

Our elementary schools are overcrowded now and the district is using modular buildings to make room for our current students. By replacing Rocky Heights and Highland Hills Elementary Schools and building an additional elementary school, the needs of serving our elementary students can be met. Plus, an addition to the high school will add needed additional classrooms for our older students.

If this bond measure is not passed, our children will still need someplace to go to school if we do not build and remodel. An additional 56 modular classrooms would be needed to make room for these students. The money to purchase or lease these modular classrooms will come from funds intended for the education of these students, thereby shortchanging our students' education.

I feel the Hermiston community looks forward to growth and is willing to shoulder the challenges that come with that growth. It is said that good schools make for good communities. Please join me in voting for the Hermiston School Bond so we can give our community and our kids the schools they deserve.

Bonnie Luisi, school board member, Hermiston

Taxes are expensive!

The East Oregonian reported March 9 that the Hermiston school property taxes were \$4.09 per \$1,000. That may be true for the basic tax, but the various school taxes are very close to 50 percent of the total property tax.

I have a modest home valued at about \$150,000. My tax payment last year was \$2,804.24, with the various school taxes (including bond issues) at \$1,363.35 or 49 percent of the total tax.

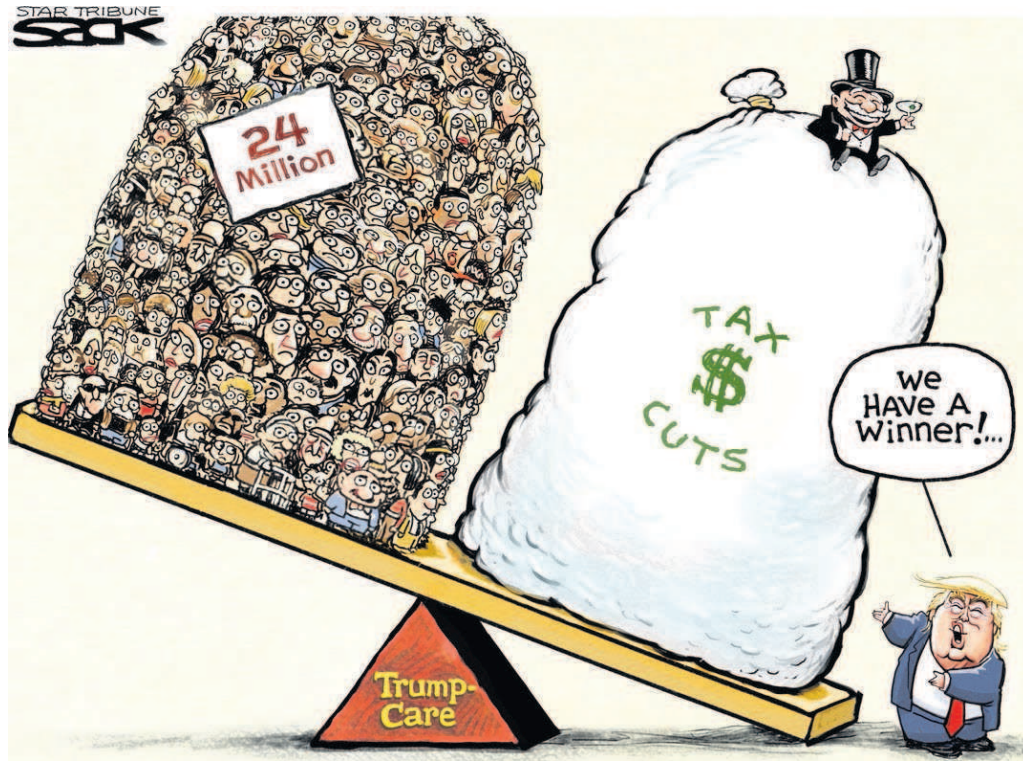
Enough is enough! Vote no on more taxes.

Jim Tiede Hermiston

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.

OTHER VIEWS



The original Obamacare lie

You hear it from Republicans, pundits and even some Democrats. It's often said in a tone of regret: I wish Obama had done health reform in a bipartisan way, rather than jamming through a partisan bill.

The lament seems to have the ring of truth, given that not a single Republican in Congress voted for Obamacare. Yet it is false — demonstrably so.

That it's nonetheless stuck helps explain how the Republicans have landed in such a mess on health care. The Congressional Budget Office released a jaw-dropping report Monday estimating that the Republican health plan would take insurance from 24 million people, many of them Republican voters, and raise medical costs for others. The bill effectively rescinds benefits for the elderly, poor, sick and middle class, and funnels the money to the rich, via tax cuts.

The AARP doesn't like the bill, nor do groups representing doctors, nurses, hospitals, the disabled and people with cancer, diabetes and multiple sclerosis. Other than that, Mrs. Lincoln, it's a great bill.

If Republicans still pass it, they will take political ownership of the flawed U.S. health care system — after making it much more flawed. Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., has said the bill is so bad that it would “put the House majority at risk next year.” On the other hand, if Republicans fail to pass their own bill, they'll look weak and incompetent, which is also not a good look to voters.

How did the party's leaders put themselves in this position? The short answer is that they began believing their own hype and set out to solve a problem that doesn't exist.

Obamacare obviously has flaws. Most important, some of its insurance markets — created to sell coverage to the uninsured — aren't functioning well enough. Alas, Paul Ryan, Mitch McConnell and Donald Trump are not trying to fix that problem. They're trying to fix a fictional one: saving America from a partisan, socialistic big-government takeover of health care.

To understand why that description is wrong, it helps to recall some history. Democratic attempts to cover the uninsured stretch back almost a century. But opposition to universal government-provided insurance was always too strong. Even Lyndon Johnson, with big congressional majorities, could pass programs only for the elderly and the poor — over intense opposition that equated Medicare with the death of capitalism.

So Democrats slowly moved their proposals to the right, relying more on private insurance rather than government programs. As they shifted, though, Republicans shifted even farther right. Bill Clinton's plan was quite moderate but still couldn't pass.



DAVID LEONARDT
Comment

When Barack Obama ran for president, he faced a choice. He could continue moving the party to the center or tack back to the left. The second option would have focused on government programs, like expanding Medicare to start at age 55. But Obama and his team thought a plan that mixed government and markets — farther to the right of Clinton's — could cover millions of people and had a realistic chance of passing.

They embarked on a bipartisan approach. They borrowed from Mitt Romney's plan in Massachusetts, gave a big role to a bipartisan Senate working group, incorporated conservative ideas and won initial support from some Republicans. The bill also won over groups that had long blocked reform, like the American Medical Association.

But congressional Republicans ultimately decided that opposing any bill, regardless of its substance, was in their political interest. The consultant Frank Luntz wrote an influential memo in 2009 advising Republicans to talk positively about “reform” while also opposing actual solutions. McConnell, the Senate leader, persuaded his colleagues that they could make Obama look bad by denying him bipartisan cover.

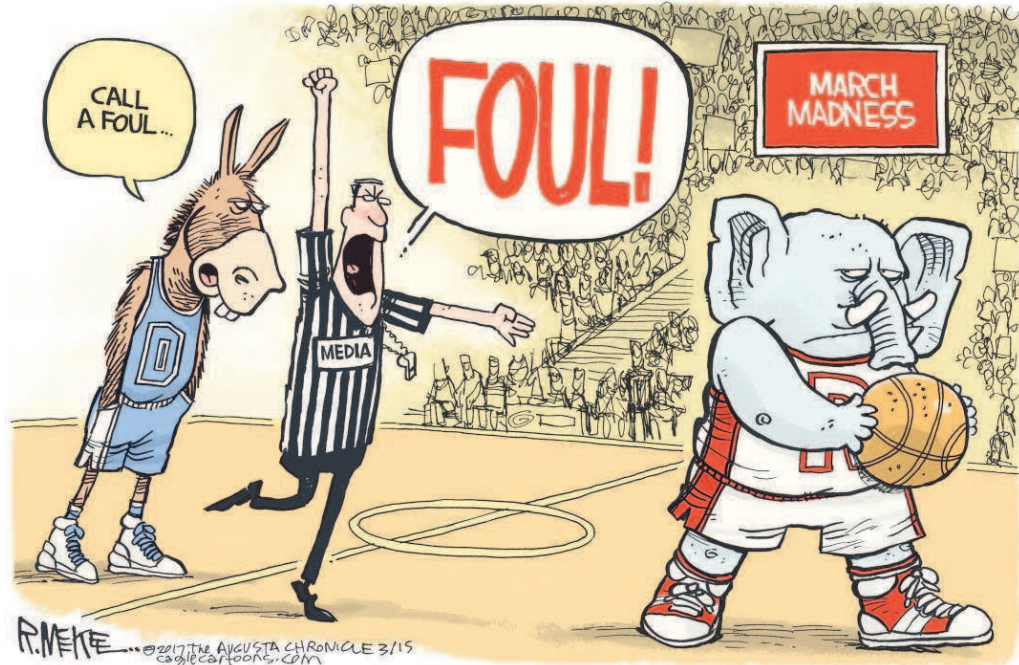
At that point, Obama faced a second choice — between forging ahead with a substantively bipartisan bill and forgetting about covering the uninsured. The kumbaya plan for which pundits now wax nostalgic was not an option.

The reason is simple enough: Obamacare is the bipartisan version of health reform. It accomplishes a liberal end through conservative means and is much closer to the plan conservatives favored a few decades ago than the one liberals did. “It was the ultimate troll,” as Michael Anne Kyle of Harvard Business School put it, “for Obama to pass Republican health reform.”

Today's Republican Party has moved so far to the right that it no longer supports any plan that covers the uninsured. Of course, Republican leaders are not willing to say as much, because they know how unpopular that position is. Having run out of political ground, Ryan, McConnell and Trump have had to invent the notion of a socialistic Obamacare that they will repeal and replace with ... something great! This morning they were also left to pretend that the Budget Office report was something less than a disaster.

Their approach to Obamacare has worked quite nicely for them, until now. Lying can be an effective political tactic. Believing your own alternative facts, however, is usually not so smart.

David Leonardt is the managing editor of The Upshot, an arm of the New York Times, and an op-ed columnist for the paper.



Be heard!

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