

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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OUR VIEW

Another farm bill deadline missed

Last month Senate and House conferees working on the 2018 Farm Bill failed to reach an agreement before the old farm bill expired and without Congress voting to extend it.

Congress has once again let down American farmers and ranchers who need to know the extent of farm programs when making plans for next year's crop. It is impossible for those in agriculture to plan for the next season without knowing how the federal government intends to impact their business.

This has happened all too often before.

The 2014 Farm Bill was supposed to be the 2012 Farm Bill. It took more than three years to negotiate, despite original promises in 2011 that it would be passed before the 2012 presidential primary season. In reality, constant wrangling over the cost of nutrition programs and crop insurance subsidies

mandated that the old 2008 bill be extended a number of times before Congress came up with a bill it could pass.

Each farm bill has many parts. Some programs, such as commodity and nutrition programs, were created under separate legislation. The farm bill provides funding for these programs and provides governing language that for the life of the bill supersedes the "permanent" legislation. The farm bill also creates new programs not included in any other legislation.

So in establishing an expiration date on the farm bill, Congress puts a gun to its own head. Commodity programs revert to "permanent" law written in the '30s and '40s should it fail to enact a measure to replace or extend the expiring farm bill. Other programs die altogether.

The permanent laws are so antiquated they have little relevance to modern



agriculture. Trying to apply them in the 21st century should create consequences too dire for Congress to ignore its duty. Or at least that's the theory. Congress has repeatedly failed to yield to its own extortion.

Senate and House conferees are confident they will reach agreement and pass a bill before the end of the year. We'll see. Between now and then there will be an

election. Given the current divisive politics, that couldn't possibly hold things up.

But it also provides an opportunity.

While we don't think much of legislators who can't meet their own deadlines, we have to put a fair amount of the blame on their employers.

We may not get the government we deserve, as the old saw goes, but we do get the one we vote for.

More women needed on Round-Up board

The Pendleton Round-Up Board of Directors needs to include more women. There are 19 directors, and only one of the members is female.

According to the 2017 Census, 47 percent of residents in Umatilla County are women. And yet, females only make up 5 percent of the Round-Up board. That is embarrassing.

Next time the Round-Up board comes to the Pendleton City Council with their hand out, the council should ask the board why they find it so difficult to include women on their board.

Justin Morton
Pendleton

Gomolski has what it takes

I am asking you to vote for Mark Gomolski for Hermiston City Council.

I have known Mark Gomolski since he moved to Hermiston. I have worked with Mark Gomolski on a number of different projects. Mark is a very hard worker with a strong moral compass. He has the skills to be a very effective member of the council. I urge you to give Mark Gomolski your vote.

Dan Dufault
Hermiston

If you sign up, you show up

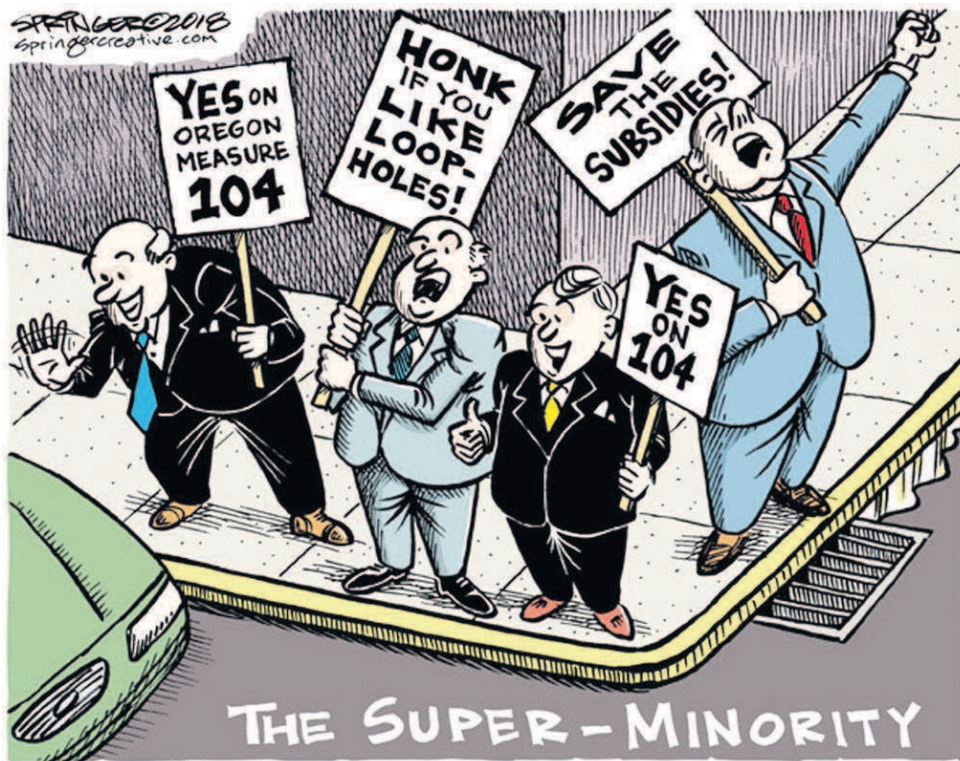
I was shocked at how little Greg Walden really knows about his district, as evidenced in the Oct. 5 KTVZ (Bend television station) debate with Jamie McLeod-Skinner. I can only assume that is because Greg Walden has chosen to not follow a basic rule that is taught to all young leaders. This rule is: If you sign up, you show up.

Greg Walden signed up to be our 2nd Congressional District representative, but he no longer shows up. His town hall meetings stopped being scheduled months and months ago. Because of lack of interface with his constituents, he appears out of touch with the real challenges facing the people of our 20 counties.

In response to Jamie McLeod-Skinner's statement that "close to 50 percent of people in this district are below or just above the poverty level," he kept trumpeting how well the national economy is doing ("the strongest economy that anyone has seen since the 1960s!"). The economy is looking good for the wealthy, for stockholders, and for his corporate donors. Plus they just got gigantic, budget-busting permanent tax cuts. But none of that holds true for rural Oregon.

Let's look at the facts:

- According to the Oregon Employment Department, 10 of the 15 Oregon counties with the highest poverty rates are here in Greg Walden's district.
- Greg Walden voted for, and can't stop talking about, permanent tax breaks for corporations and the 1 percent.
- The individual tax cuts — the ones that could actually help his constituents — were paltry and designed to expire in just a few years.
- Paul Ryan and other GOP leaders



confirmed that they'll pay for that \$1.7 trillion tax package with cuts to Medicare and Social Security after the November election.

How is this helping our district? It isn't. It's helping the 1 percent and Walden's corporate PAC allies.

Jamie McLeod-Skinner has driven over 40,000 miles through this district, listening to the stories of Oregonians, not millionaire CEOs. She knows what's really happening and will work for our communities, not corporations. Jamie McLeod-Skinner has my vote.

Vickie Read
Pendleton

Walden fails to protect health coverage

I am writing this letter to you in support of Jamie McLeod-Skinner for Congress.

We need new ideas and new blood in this very important position. The present congressman has for a very long time not been responsive to the voice of the people and their needs. The latest attempt in leading the charge to do away with the Affordable Care Act is a case in point.

Thousands of Oregonians have signed onto this health care insurance and it is keeping their financial boat afloat. So many have the prospect of bankruptcy if they are not covered with health insurance when a health problem arises and hospital stays, and even minor surgeries are needed.

There was no new legislation to replace this health care lifeline that so many families depend on, so they would have been without the protection. Students are covered up until age 26, pre-existing conditions are covered. These are only a few among many other helps built in to the Affordable Care Act.

The present congressman has had 20 years to prove himself to the people, so far he has failed in that endeavor. As President Trump says, "let's drain the swamp!" It's

time for a new Congress.

Vote for Jamie McLeod-Skinner for Congress.

Janet L. Beitel
Umatilla

Walden's constituents aren't stupid

In the televised debate against Jamie McLeod-Skinner on Oct. 5, Greg Walden claimed to support the Children's Health Insurance Program. He stated, "I have consistently supported children's health insurance programs and, in fact, I led the way in Congress, as chair of the Energy and Commerce Committee, to hear from all sides as to how we can expand and improve children's health insurance."

His statements do not match the facts:

- From 2007-2017, Walden voted against reauthorizing CHIP funding all but one time, jeopardizing health care for 8.9 million children, including 120,000 in Oregon.
 - Last year, he held CHIP funding hostage, trying to bargain for cuts to Medicare and the Affordable Care Act. It was only when the Congressional Budget Office stepped in with a report showing that eliminating CHIP would actually increase the cost to taxpayers (because the kids would be covered under the more costly exchanges) that he gave in. This is well-documented in news coverage.
 - While Walden was holding CHIP funding hostage, the governors of all 50 states had to scramble to find ways to pay critical medical services for children. According to the Kaiser Health Care Foundation, several states even had to send out notices to parents and doctors warning that the program would be canceled.
 - Three months later, he voted for Trump's rescission bill to cut \$7 billion from CHIP (it didn't pass).
- Using children as a "bargaining chip" is not my idea of a real leader. On Nov. 6, I'll

be voting for Jamie McLeod-Skinner.

Vickie Hendricks
Pendleton

Murdock is involved, successful

This letter is to endorse the re-election of George Murdock to the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners.

I have personally worked with George in his leadership roles in Rotary, Wildhorse Foundation, GOBHI, EOCI Prison Advisory Committee and Pendleton Chamber of Commerce. George is serving or has served in leadership roles in all of these areas, in addition to volunteering for Altrusa's Feed the Child, Athena grants program, and with his church. George is an exemplary citizen of Umatilla County, and a credit to our community.

More specifically to George's qualifications for election, he has made a marked difference in Umatilla County from the day of his first election. I worked with him on solid waste issues, as well as numerous public safety and mental health functions, throughout which I found him to be fair, impartial, and always willing to listen and offer creative solutions.

George has been instrumental in initiating the County Charter Review, transfer of EOTEC to Hermiston, helping to create new housing, reestablishing our Drug Court, rebuilding relationships with law enforcement, helping to increase the sheriff's department's much-needed patrol staff, courthouse security, improved mental health services in our schools, public transportation improvements, expanded training for county management and staff, and much-improved county customer service.

Please join me in voting to re-elect George Murdock as Umatilla County commissioner.

Susan McHenry
Pendleton

Murdock's leadership efforts show

We urge you to vote for George Murdock for Umatilla County Commissioner.

He has shown fiscal leadership in developing a new budget process, a balanced budget plan for Umatilla County and understands the need for accountability in county finances.

George works to benefit all residents of the county. His efforts have led to modernization of the Umatilla County Public Health Department, helped to expand mental health services in the schools, development of a regional transportation plan for workers, students and others needing public transportation, economic agreements with Vadata and Lamb Weston, and his leadership creates cooperation between the sheriff's office and the board of commissioners.

George works for all of us and is dedicated, enthusiastic and trustworthy.

Please join us in supporting George.

Delores and Steve Bjerke
Pendleton

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