

# O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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## OUR VIEW

## Buehler for Governor

Oregon is on cruise control. The economy is humming. Jobs are plentiful in most places. The education system is showing just enough improvement to avoid setting off serious alarms.

Right now, public pension costs are a warning light in the dashboard for many local budgets, but smoke isn't billowing out from under the hood.

But as the state barrels along, it's hard to tell if the driver is paying attention.

Gov. Kate Brown's rise to governor was a surprising turn of events, both a blessing and a curse for the longtime Oregon politician. Former Gov. John Kitzhaber abruptly resigned in February 2015, and Brown, then the secretary of state, stepped adeptly into the role. The transition was smooth, mostly because Brown opted to carry on Kitzhaber's policies and direction while declining to offer her own vision for the state, especially in matters that are crucial to the state's future.

We refer again to PERS, a spike strip across the highway just around the curve with the potential to send the state into the ditch. The system is looking at more than \$25 billion in unfunded obligations, and it needs to be addressed now. So far, Democrats in the governor's office have failed to

take the problem seriously even as the costs have piled up on local agencies around the state.

It will take either well-placed political capital — which Brown has — or an innovative approach from someone with ambitious ideas and little to lose. Which is where Knute Buehler comes in.

Buehler, a Republican representative from Bend, isn't beholden to the public unions that make up a large portion of Brown's base of support. While Brown has the resources and clout to tackle PERS reform head on, Oregonians are rightfully dubious she'll do it after kicking the can down the road for so long. It is no longer someone else's problem.

Buehler spoke candidly and thoughtfully with the *East Oregonian* editorial board about his views on education, health care, homelessness and the urban/rural divide. On education in particular he makes a strong point that Gov. Brown has not been the leader Oregon needs. Graduation rates are low, truancy rates are high and we fall among the worst states in the nation on many other metrics. As with pension reform, it's hard to picture the necessary changes coming under another term for Brown. Buehler's plan to add school days to



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Rep. Knute Buehler speaks with the East Oregonian editorial board in Pendleton.

the calendar, increase funding by at least 15 percent and offer more support for teachers is a fresh and specific promise. We're glad to have something to hold him to, if he's elected.

A Buehler governorship also carries some risk. It requires that he come through on his promise to be a moderate in the governor's office, working with a Democrat-controlled Legislature to present and fight for his ambitious ideas on education, housing and health. It also relies on the Legislature being willing to work with Buehler.

We believe Buehler is enough of a centrist to set aside the differences and focus on the big picture of Oregon's

future. Attack ads in this highly contentious and well-funded campaign would have you believe otherwise, but we find him to be a sincere candidate.

The other candidate in the race — Patrick Starnes, an Independent — has staked his fate on the issue of campaign finance reform. No progress is possible, he contends, unless big money is removed from the political process. While it's a lofty goal, Starnes isn't convincing in his ability to accomplish that single goal, let alone the myriad of other issues facing the state.

We find Knute Buehler to be the best choice for governor in 2018, and encourage your vote for him.

## YOUR VIEWS

### Davis a wealth of positives

Facts why Lori Davis should be re-elected to Hermiston City Council:

She is the best. Her depth of experience on the council for eight years is a real asset. She is known for her cooperative interactions with everyone, working consistently to contribute what she has to offer, and for helping out wherever needed. She offers assistance and is willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done.

Lori has effective listening skills. She brings a creative and skillful toolkit. She is considered a problem-solver to her peers; Lori is a role model for promoting other's successes. Lori is honest, hard working, steady, dependable, reliable, not boastful or rude.

Lori is best known for her quiet, calm demeanor. She projects a good attitude. If Lori is asked to take on a task, it will be completed. Lori is very much a team player, with a strong work ethic, consistent support, and willingness to learn new programs. Lori is quality.

How do I know this? I am her mother. Lori Rosenberg Davis is a home-grown product of Hermiston and proud of it! Also, these things were said about her when she was awarded Employee of the Year during her 18 years of work at TRCI.

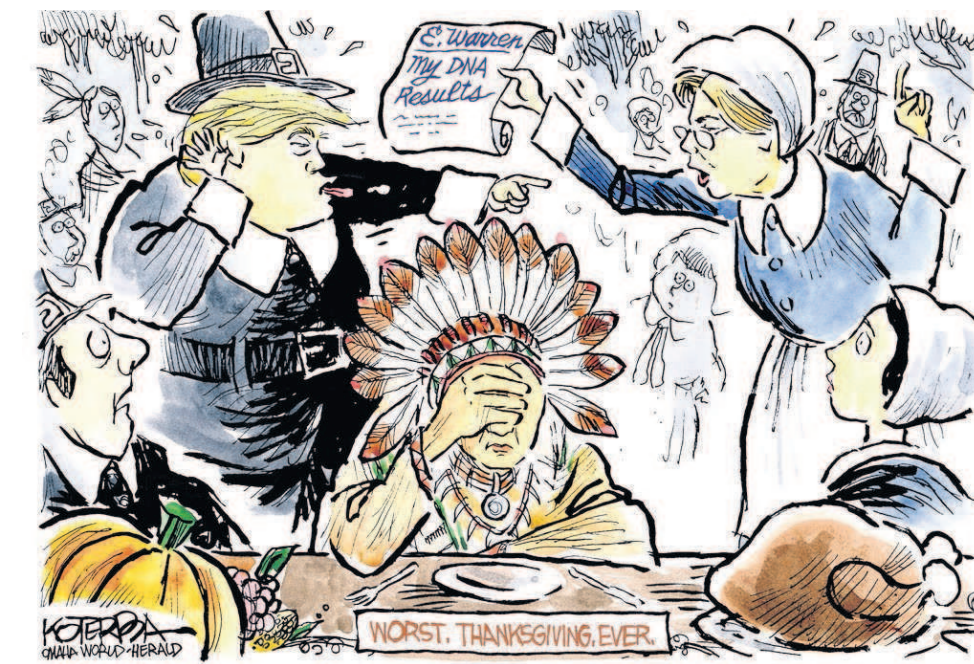
Please vote for Lori Davis.

June Rosenberg  
Hermiston

### Walden has changed, should be voted out

I don't expect my congressional representative to agree with me on every issue, but I do expect them to actually listen to me and honestly explain their point of view on issues I care about. Apparently our Congressman Greg Walden no longer seems to think that's an important part of his job. He still comes to Oregon to meet with big donors and hold private meetings, but what about ordinary rural Oregonians like me? Don't we count anymore?

The Trump-GOP tax "reform" wasn't designed to help us: huge tax cuts for corporations and the very rich, small and temporary cuts for most of us. Heck, higher gas prices have eaten up what I'll get. Now the Trump team are trying to justify how the deficit has ballooned to \$1.5 trillion (as projected by the Congressional Budget Office early on). Greg Walden used to be outraged at the much smaller deficit when a Democrat was in the White House, but not anymore. Their proposed solution? Cut "entitlements." That's the word they use for Social Security (which we paid for over the course of our working lives) Medicare, and Medicaid. Many of us have family or



friends who barely get by and depend on those programs literally to keep them alive. Maybe this makes sense to the wealthy donors that Greg Walden meets with when he's back in Oregon, but it makes zero sense to me.

I want a representative in Congress who will keep the real needs of their constituents front and center when critical issues like taxes, Social Security, Medicare, and affordable health care are on the table. Fortunately we have a candidate who will. Her name is Jamie McLeod-Skinner. I met her when she visited Milton-Freewater, and she really impressed me with her common sense, balanced approach and the way she actually listened to us! She has driven over 40,000 miles across our district over the last year to hear what's on our minds. I'm so impressed with her. She has earned my vote!

Nora Connors  
Milton-Freewater

### Murdock's work brings county's success

Umatilla County Commissioner George Murdock should retain his position in the upcoming election.

I have had the pleasure of working with and watching George in action for many years. It would be a long search to find a person more dedicated to the task at hand, be it in education or his current position as Umatilla County commissioner.

Budgets are balanced, sheriff's deputies added and staff morale overall is the highest it has been in a very long time. No, everything is not perfect, and of course never will be in the county government structure. Overall though, the county

is functioning better than I personally have seen in quite some time. The most important thing is to have dedicated, enthusiastic individuals at the helm, and George certainly fits that description.

Please join me in casting your vote for George Murdock for Umatilla County commissioner.

Tom Winn  
Helix

### Social Security, Medicare not entitlements

The GOP leadership has started referring to Social Security and Medicare as "entitlements" that need to be scaled back. But all of us know that these are benefits we have earned and paid for with deductions from our paychecks over the course of our working lives. They are not gifts to be withheld when the dominant political party wants to address budget deficits they themselves created by passing massive tax cuts for corporations and the mega-rich. I have worked all my life and, now that I am retired, I depend on Social Security and Medicare to maintain a modest standard of living.

There is, however, another kind of "entitlement" that needs to be addressed in this election. That's the feeling of entitlement that our incumbent representative, Greg Walden, seems to feel about his job in Washington. He seems to have forgotten that he works for us, the voters of CD2, and that he is supposed to represent our interests. We don't see him much around here — no town hall meetings for the last year and a half. His office gives perfunctory off-topic responses, at best, to letters and phone calls from constituents.

By contrast, his challenger, the moderate Democrat Jamie McLeod-Skinner, has driven all over the district, meeting with voters, listening to their concerns and their ideas, and putting forth common-sense position papers on the issues we care about most. She seems like the better choice this time around.

Chris Schuenig  
Pendleton

### Measure 105 does not match Oregon's values

I was very happy to see Umatilla County District Attorney Dan Primus will be voting no on Measure 105. He joins the long list of law enforcement personnel who will vote against this unfair and un-Oregonian measure. To see the full list, go to <https://orunited.org/our-coalition/>

Names I do not see on the list are Umatilla County Sheriff Terry Rowan and Morrow County Sheriff Ken Matlack. In fact, they've done the opposite. They've decided to join the anti-immigrant side that supports racial profiling. Why would they do that when immigrants in our counties bring so much to our communities? Eastern Oregon values are those of welcoming others and treating others with respect. Measure 105 does just the opposite.

Then there's the case of Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson, who does not have enough information to form an opinion. I think he definitely needs to do his research as many of his constituents come from immigrant families.

We need to hold our elected officials accountable. We need to make sure they uphold our values. We need to vote "No" on Measure 105.

Selene Torres-Medrano  
Umatilla

### Davis ready for third term

Lori Davis and I have worked together for nearly 20 years. Now completing her second term on the Hermiston City Council, Lori continues to support Hermiston's family-friendly vision, embracing our diverse blend of proud residents. She has invested much personal time and effort to strengthen this community and her enthusiasm continues to grow.

She's ready for a third term, shepherding new goals surrounding recreational amenities (particularly for youth) and more family resources in general. Her passion for celebrating Hermiston while fortifying our future ahead are important reasons for voting "Yes" in November — Lori Davis for Hermiston City Council.

Lavon Starr Meyers  
Hermiston

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