

O EAST OREGONIAN

PINION

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OUR VIEW

Tip of the Hat,

kick in the pants

A kick in the pants to Oregon’s failure to keep up with the growing legal marijuana market.

Back in 2014, when legalized recreational cannabis was Oregon’s hottest topic, we endorsed the idea with the caveat that it be rolled out with proper checks in place. Prohibition was not working, and the drug’s harm is on par with — if not less than — alcohol. By regulating the market we expected the dual benefit of safer trade and tax revenue.

The latter has come through better than predicted. The former still needs work.

An audit by the Secretary of State’s office found that oversight of medical marijuana in particular is “insufficient,” with the likelihood that much of the product is going to the black market. The Oregon Liquor Control Commission isn’t keeping up with inspections as the market has surged.

We’re less concerned about the possibility of federal government intrusion on the enterprise than we are about marijuana get-

ting into children’s hands. The more manufactured marijuana that slips out the back door, the less we know about who is getting their hands on it.

A kick in the pants to the attempt by the Humane Society of the United States and a group of west-side legislators to prohibit coyote-killing contests in Eastern Oregon.

Don’t take this as a straight-up endorsement of such events. There is certainly room to question and criticize the practice of killing wildlife for pure entertainment — no matter how ubiquitous or troublesome a species may be.

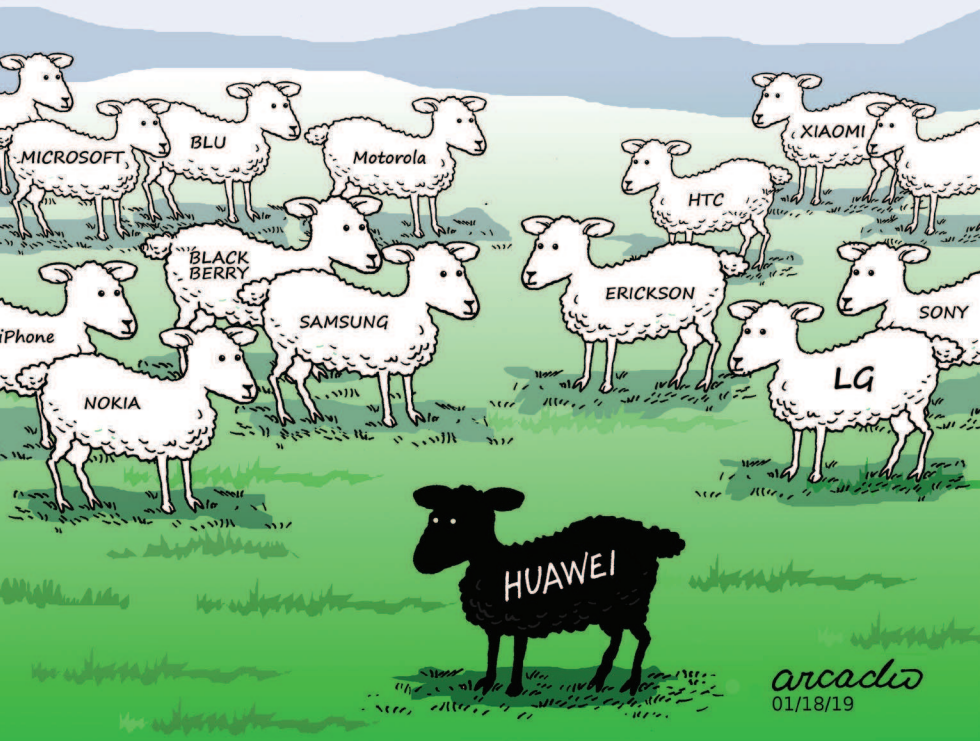
But the issue has absolutely no bearing on the west-side legislators’ districts, or on most Oregonians. The sponsors of Senate Bill 723 are mostly from the Portland metro area. There is no environmental or ecological impact cited in the bill. It’s a bill that rests on the moral argument that killing animals for sport is wrong, but more directly



that it’s mean. We’ve seen evidence that a genuine effort is underway in Oregon to bring urban and rural to a place of cooperation and connec-

tion. Bills like this show little understanding or respect, instead relying on majority muscle to enforce feel-good policies on people capable of making their own decisions.

OTHER VIEWS



Future technology at risk of sabotage

The Washington Post

Huawei, the Chinese telecom giant, has insisted in recent years that it operates within the bounds of local and international laws and norms. When a former employee filed a legal claim alleging that he was directed by Huawei to steal rivals’ trade secrets, the firm declared, “Every employee is expected to adhere to applicable laws, regulations and business ethics in the countries where we operate.” But a new U.S. federal indictment issued this week alleges this was far from true.

Huawei, which makes smartphones as well as gear for connectivity, including the forthcoming super-fast 5G networks, has been largely barred from business in the United States for some time, partly over suspicions that it could build “back doors” into its equipment for spying or network mischief. Leading Chinese companies are often closely intertwined with, and required to be subservient to, the state. So far, tangible evidence of hardware meddling has not been made public, if it exists. However, concerns voiced in recent years about Huawei’s behavior now look prescient. According to the indictment, Huawei’s approach resembles that of the Chinese state: It is unbound by a rules-based, law-governed international order, and it is determined to succeed by using theft and duplicity.

In one case described in the indictment unveiled Monday by the Justice Department, Huawei headquarters in China instructed its employees in the United States to steal the design of a mobile-phone-testing robot developed by T-Mobile. This was a valuable piece of intellectual property that Huawei wanted for its

own robot. Huawei engineers were repeatedly encouraged to carry out theft, and, the indictment says, on May 29, 2013, a Huawei engineer visiting T-Mobile slipped a robot arm into his bag and walked out of the laboratory. Overnight, he photographed the device and took critical measurements before returning it the next day, apologizing that it was taken by “mistake.” Later, Huawei responded to T-Mobile about the incident with gross deception, saying the thefts were “a moment of indiscretion” and did not reflect company policy when, in fact, the data had been sent to headquarters. Huawei even created a bonus program for workers who stole information from competitors.

This corporate deception is also behind the separate indictment of Huawei and its chief financial officer, Meng Wanzhou, the founder’s daughter, for bank and wire fraud. The indictment charges that Huawei misled the U.S. government and banks about business that violated Western sanctions against Iran. The legal proceedings against Ms. Meng, who is being held under house arrest in Canada pending an extradition request by the United States, should not be politicized in the current Sino-American trade dispute. If the charges in the indictments are true, then it is clear Huawei intentionally snubbed its nose at international norms and laws, which in turn means it could pose a potentially large national security risk to the West.

Doubts about Huawei are now being heard elsewhere, including in Australia, Poland, Britain and Germany. The next generation of connectivity — 5G networks — is far too important to put in the hands of a company that may work by lies and cover-ups.

OTHER VIEWS

In border talks, a new fight for deniers

A House-Senate conference committee is beginning work on a package of border security policies that, it is hoped, can win the support of both Democrats and Republicans. The final product is certain to include several measures that already have full, bipartisan approval: more immigration judges, more technology to detect illegal drugs at ports of entry, more humanitarian aid for migrants in custody, etc.

The hangup, of course, will be a border barrier. President Trump insists on money — his demand is \$5.7 billion — that would build new steel-slat barriers along about 230 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border. About 80 miles of that would replace current, dilapidated, inadequate fencing, while 150 or so miles would cover currently unfenced areas.

On the other side are Democrats led by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who has called a border wall “an immorality between nations” and denies evidence that a barrier would increase border security by decreasing the number of illegal crossings into the United States.

Pelosi won the 35-day partial government shutdown by sticking to her position. The new negotiations will test whether she and other Democratic barrier deniers can prevail again.

The need for new and improved barriers along some parts of the border is in the news almost daily. Take, for example, the events of Jan. 24 near Lukeville, Arizona, in the Tucson Sector of the border. Even though there is a six-lane crossing at Lukeville, migrants seek to enter the United States illegally in nearby areas that have ineffective fencing. Thus, on the 24th, Border Patrol agents found a large group — 242 people, most from Central America — who illegally crossed the border west of Lukeville.

“Agents discovered the group after they crawled over and under the crude vehicle barrier separating the United States from Mexico,” the Border Patrol said in a press release.

Just a week earlier, a group of 84 migrants arrived nearby in a tour bus, and then crawled under the fence into the United States, where they were taken into custody by Border Patrol agents.

On Dec. 19-20, in nearly the same place, the Border Patrol apprehended 306 Central American migrants crossing illegally into the U.S.

Clearly, the fencing in that part of the Tucson Sector is not working.

The border is 1,954 miles long. Everyone agrees that big parts of it do not require any fencing because the terrain is so rough that it makes crossing very difficult.

On the other hand, a significant part of the border does need barriers. Right now, there are about 705 miles of fencing — about 405 miles of pedestrian fencing and about

300 of vehicle fencing, which blocks vehicles but allows people on foot to cross easily.

The vehicle fencing did nothing to stop recent crossings near Lukeville and in other places on the border. In addition, some of the pedestrian fencing is easy to breach because it is old, falling apart and was never that imposing in the first place. The Trump administration seeks to do three things: 1. Replace some ineffective pedestrian fence; 2. Replace current vehicle fence with new pedestrian fence; and 3. Build new pedestrian fence in some currently unfenced areas.

The construction of barriers dramatically reduces illegal border crossing attempts. Looking at the Yuma Sector along the border in western Arizona, in 2005, before the construction of barriers, the Border Patrol caught 138,438 illegal crossers, according to figures compiled by the Center for Immigration Studies, which favors greater restrictions on immigration. Last year, with barriers, there were 26,244 such apprehensions in the Yuma Sector.

The San Diego Sector in California is a case study in the effectiveness of a border barrier. In 1986, before the construction of a barrier, there were more than 628,000 apprehensions, while untold numbers of others successfully made it across the border illegally. In 2017, after the construction of extensive barriers, there were 26,086 apprehensions, according to the Border Patrol.

Would anyone argue that border barriers had nothing to do with those striking before-and-after reductions? And, given what is happening in the Tucson Sector and other places today, would anyone argue that new, more daunting barriers such as the Trump administration proposes would not reduce the number of illegal crossings?

The effectiveness of border barriers is a settled fact. Yet some Democrats, led by the speaker of the House, deny that fact and insist that new and improved barriers would not increase border security. Other prominent Democrats, such as recently declared presidential candidate Sen. Kamala Harris, have called the Trump barrier proposal a “medieval vanity project.”

At the same time, other Democrats seem more willing to take a fact-based approach. “In the past, we have supported ... enhanced fencing,” Rep. Hakeem Jeffries of New York, a member of the Democratic leadership, said recently. “And I think that’s something that’s reasonable that should be on the table.”

Who will prevail in the border talks? Will it be Pelosi and her fellow deniers, or Jeffries and the reality-based community? The president and Congress have two weeks to find out.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.

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