

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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OUR VIEW

FDA needs to learn a new language

Some call it cowboy talk. Others call it straight talk, plain talk, talking turkey or just plain English.

Whatever you want to call it, the Food and Drug Administration often doesn't do it.

A case in point. The FDA has been monkeying around — there's some plain talk for you — with the labels the agency wants to paste on jars of honey and maple syrup and on containers of cranberry products.

The FDA wanted to tell consumers what is in honey and maple syrup. If ever there were two products that need no label whatsoever, it's honey and maple syrup.

What's in honey? H-O-N-E-Y. End of story.

What's in maple syrup? M-A-P-L-E-S-Y-R-U-P.

There's no added anything. On the nutritional labels of those two products, only carbohydrates — sugars — are listed.

What the ever-so-helpful FDA was trying to do is point out that if someone put honey or maple syrup on a pancake, he would be adding sugar to it.

Fair enough, except the FDA said that honey and maple syrup contained



Capital Press Photo

Maple syrup producers complain that a Food and Drug Administration labeling requirement will mislead consumers into thinking sugar is added to their product.

“added sugars” because they added sugar to whatever they were put on.

In plain language, that is wrong. How or why the FDA ever came up with that idea, we cannot say. That's like saying milk has added ingredients because some people put it on their cereal.

In the case of cranberry products, anyone who has ever eaten one knows they are tart. To make them less tart,

sugar is added to some products made with cranberries. Why the FDA needs to say anything, we cannot imagine. It's right there on the nutrition label.

Now, however, the FDA has reworked these labels in a way that is still bizarre. The labels now say that if you put honey or maple syrup on a pancake you will add sugar to your diet.

FDA might want to rename its label policy “Nutrition for Dummies.”

Why the FDA gets itself involved in such tomfoolery, we cannot say.

What we can say is the FDA is the same agency that took the Food Safety Modernization Act and wrote rules that apply to everything from cattle feed — distillers grains — to onions, which had never been involved in food safety problems.

By the time the FDA was done, the food safety regulations included 14 final rules and 36 separate guidance documents on such things as 12 pages on counting the number of employees a farm has. The title: “Determining the Number of Employees for Purposes of the ‘Small Business’ Definition in Parts 117 and 507 (CGMP and Preventive Controls Regulations for Human and Animal Food): Guidance for Industry.”

Good grief.

Such rules are nearly unreadable by anyone who is not a bureaucrat. A new industry has sprung up to help farmers figure out what the FDA means in those documents.

We have a suggestion. The folks at the FDA should go back to school and take a class: English as a second language.

They have bureaucratese down, now they should try cowboy talk.

OTHER VIEWS

Get patients some cold and allergy relief

Bend Bulletin

Methamphetamine is bad. Very bad. That pretty much goes without saying.

And pseudoephedrine is an ingredient in one way to make methamphetamine, which makes easy access to pseudoephedrine bad, too.

But pseudoephedrine used correctly can be an effective ingredient in cold and allergy medication that works best for some people.

The Oregon Legislature “fixed” the problem in 2005 by banning over-the-counter sales of products with pseudoephedrine. That and other changes helped cut down on use and production of methamphetamine.

Oregon's law helped fix one problem. Getting people effective relief to cold and allergy symptoms is a problem, too. The right medication makes a big difference in whether people can get on with their day productively or might be better off in bed.

The Oregon law didn't prevent people from getting legal access to medication with pseudoephedrine. It does mean it requires the additional expense and hassle of a doctor's prescription.

Rep. Bill Post, R-Keizer, has tried multi-

ple times to create more flexibility in Oregon's law. He failed again, this year. It's a shame.

Post's House Bill 2303 would have put the drugs behind the counter and tracked their sale with the National Precursor Log Exchange. More than half the states in the country use it and it allows purchases of drugs with pseudoephedrine to be tracked and linked directly to an individual.

That solution raised alarm bells with privacy advocates, such as the American Civil Liberties Union. Oregon's ACLU testified against the bill because law enforcement has access to that patient database without a warrant.

That basically killed that version of the bill. A legislative alternative was to use Oregon's existing drug tracking system, called the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, and put limits on the grams of the ingredient sold. Then that had problems, as reported by Salem's *Statesman Journal*. Oregon's system doesn't allow tracking in real time and doesn't allow any tracking of grams sold by individual. HB 2303 collapsed and is apparently dead for this session.

Post should not give up and should come back again next year with something that will pass.



YOUR VIEWS

Oregon Republicans don't deserve our respect

I had hoped when lying Donald was elected that the rapid degradation of the Republican Party would remain mostly a national issue. Fat chance. The pitiable ploy of the Oregon Senate minority to flee and hide like petulant teenagers who didn't get their way rather than doing the primary job they were elected to do — vote on whether or not a bill becomes law — is simply the latest proof that the GOP rot is widespread and worsening.

My long-held respect for our local senator, Bill Hansell, evaporated after he glibly told The Associated Press Thursday he was hiding out somewhere “south of Oregon.” At least he didn't threaten to shoot anyone, as one of his moronic colleagues hinted he was ready to do. What a proud day for the Oregon GOP, aligning itself with right-wing militias. (Next they'll be siding with Russia over the American intelligence services.)

Sadly, we live in a time when Republi-

cans and Democrats are so polarized that about the only time legislation is passed is when one “team” holds a solid majority. But our GOP state senators, like their D.C. role models, have shown they don't think rules apply to them. Don't like how a vote is going to turn out, then slink away and hide so a proper quorum for a vote can't be achieved.

It sounds familiar, I'm afraid. Don't want the president to have a chance to appoint a Supreme Court justice, then just ignore the process and don't let it go to a vote. Don't like how that last election went, then redraw the district into a convoluted shape that gathers the necessary voter base to insure you win. Don't like people of color voting against you, then enact unnecessary voter access laws that disproportionately alienate those voters.

Welcome to 2019 and a GOP that didn't have the backbone or integrity to avert being remolded into its leader's image. The transformation is complete, all the way from Washington, D.C., to Salem.

Hal McCune
Pendleton

Republican senators should be lauded for taking a stand

Oregon's proposed “cap and trade” (House Bill 2020) is more than a sales tax on all products, especially food and fuel.

According to Rep. Carl Wilson, R-Grants Pass, “This is the most destructive bill to ever come out of the House of Representatives. Workers will tremendously suffer under cap and trade. Thousands of jobs will be lost. Wages will decline. Gas prices will increase and family budgets will be strained. Climate change is a global problem not an Oregon problem. Oregon workers should not be punished for reckless environmental policies of China and India.”

The fact is HB 2020 is a cap and trade tax, a sales tax on all Oregonians, especially the poor and middle class, that will have zero impact on global warming or climate change. The Socialist Democrat politicians that control Oregon have no regard for Oregonians east of the Cascades or south of Eugene.

Their socialist policies foster homelessness, making Oregon the second-highest homeless state in America per capita. These

Democrats prefer illegal immigrants to Oregonians, protecting predator wolves instead of protecting cattle ranchers and abolishing the Second Amendment instead of protecting legal gun owner rights.

Stand behind our Oregon Republican senators that have made a stand against these Democrat Socialist politicians that are usurping our constitutional heritage and our way of life. Abraham Lincoln called our Declaration of Independence a “rebuke and stumbling-block to tyranny and oppression.” Our present Oregon government does not represent most of Oregon nor does it consider our grievances. Our Republican Senators have made a stand against the tyranny and oppression of a government that no longer represents most of the state of Oregon. This may be our last opportunity to thwart the socialist takeover of our beloved state.

Do not return to the Oregon Senate, senators, until this oppression and bullying stops! Let these patriot senators of Oregon and America know we stand with them and will help bear the price of liberty with our lives if need be.

Stuart Dick
Irrigon