

# O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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## OUR VIEW

### Can transportation bill provide template for climate bill?

Nearly three years ago lawmakers on both sides of the political fence joined together and spent 18 months canvassing Oregon to seek input on a billion-dollar plan to upgrade the state's transportation system. Elected leaders visited just about every part of Oregon where they met with stakeholders and key community members. They then went back to Salem and crafted a sober, precise bill that, while it raised taxes, was very much a vehicle of the people.

The result was the passage of House Bill 2017, a massive transportation initiative.

Lawmakers should take a careful look at the process to get House Bill 2017 passed as they contemplate Oregon's failed climate bill from most recent legislative session. Then they should copy that process and go back on the road to meet with the people of Oregon.

The climate bill ended up dominating the legislative session and eventually sparked a walkout by Republican lawmakers. There was criticism of



AP Photo/Andrew Selsky, File

Lawmakers convene at the Oregon Senate after the minority Republicans ended a walkout they had begun on June 20 over a carbon-emissions bill they said would harm their rural constituents, at the Oregon Senate in Salem.

the Republican move and threats by the governor to send the Oregon State Police out to find them. The bill created a tremendous political rift inside the Legislature. Democrats, who have a supermajority in the Legislature,

tried to essentially ram the climate bill through.

Thankfully, that low moment in Oregon legislative history is behind us. Yet the supporters of the climate bill are not going to go away and there

is more than a good chance some type of similar legislation will be presented in the future. We also need to face the fact that all of us need to be more than a little concerned about our climate and the way it is changing. Climate change is real, but the real question is what can Oregonians do about it? What is the best path forward?

That's why the template used to pass House Bill 2017 should be carefully considered by our elected leaders. The recent climate change bill was a hodgepodge of wishful thinking, half-baked science connected to a cap-and-trade system that is convoluted and complicated. Our lawmakers can do better.

We need to address climate change, there is no doubt about that, but how we do it will be what is remembered. The way it was handled during the last Legislature was baffling and, ultimately, troubling for voters.

Going across Oregon, seeking input from the people, is the best way to move forward. And, if the people indicate they do not want a climate bill any time in the near future, well, so be it.

## OTHER VIEWS

### Progress being made on reducing flood risk

After April's McKay Creek flooding emergency, city leaders promised to take action to reduce the risk of future flooding. Umatilla County is playing a leading role in this effort, so readers can be confident that a coordinated effort has begun. Several meetings with federal and state agencies have taken place and we are now beginning to understand the complexity of the challenge. We recently learned that the state emergency declaration — made after several counties and numerous cities made disaster declarations — went forward to FEMA and a federal disaster declaration followed. This will eventually allow us to recover a maximum of 75% of our emergency response costs and repairs to public infrastructure.

A short-term goal of the city/county effort is to restore the capacity of McKay Creek to carry large volumes of water. Before the flooding, we believed that the creek could carry up to 1,200 cubic feet of water per second. The silting of the stream bed that was a result of the flood has greatly reduced the carrying capacity of the creek and we want to take action to restore these flows. Longer-term goals will be to study McKay Reservoir to see if its capacity to store more water during heavy rain events might be improved. We also want to make sure the gauges that measure the volume of water coming into the reservoir are accurate.

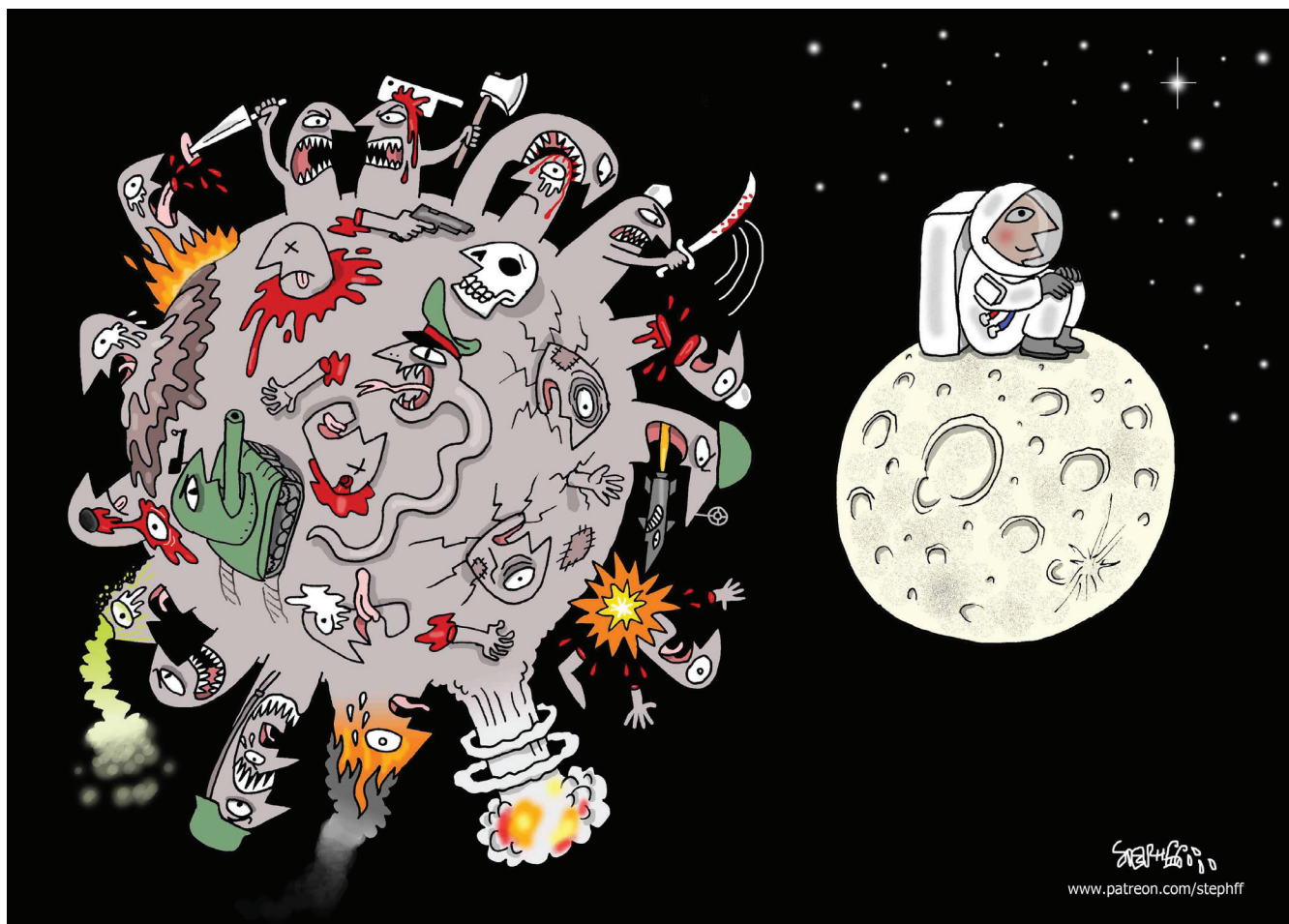
We are in the process of hiring a project manager who is knowledgeable about these kinds of water issues and knows how to navigate this complex process through literally dozens of state and federal agencies. This will be a lengthy process, unfolding over several years, and we expect progress to be slow.

Shifting focus to our streets, you have probably read that we will begin talking to civic groups about ideas to raise more revenues to fix our streets. This process has already begun and seven or eight presentations will have taken place before this column gets to you. Our budget for street maintenance is \$1.2 million in the current fiscal year, but we need to spend at least \$2.2 million per year in the next decade before we can claim to have the problem contained.

That means we need to raise another \$1 million each year for the next 10 years. We have a number of ideas about how to do this and we want to hear what you think. Perhaps you can give us an idea that we haven't thought of. Presentations have been scheduled with civic groups through October, and if you belong to a group that is not on our list, please tell us and we will come to make a presentation to your group.

Several public meetings will also be scheduled for people not affiliated with a specific organization.

John Turner is the mayor of Pendleton.

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## OTHER VIEWS

### Proposed petition would hurt shoppers

Bend Bulletin

The Oregon chapter of the AFL-CIO thinks it has a dandy idea: Limit self-checkout stands at grocery stores and Oregon will be a better place. It has filed an initiative petition with the Secretary of State that would limit the stands to two per grocery store. It hopes to gather enough signatures to place the proposal on the November 2020 ballot.

Since when did it become the business of government to dictate the maximum number of automated checkout lines in a private grocery

store? It's not.

The petition itself is an interesting one. It cites the benefits of checking out with a cashier, including social interaction and assistance if you need it. It also cites what its authors say are the ills of self-service checkout, including a better chance for shoplifting, more illegal alcohol sales and credit card thefts.

But, according to the Loss Prevention Research Council, theft and other illegal activities can be reduced if self-service checkout areas get reasonable monitoring by store employees. In reality, the AFL-CIO's prob-

lem with self-service checkout is not theft, nor isolation, nor illegal alcohol sales. Rather, it's the notion that automation means a cut in the number of union-member store employees.

We can't blame unions for fighting for better wages, benefits and working conditions for their members. But then employers can't be blamed for looking to automation to hold down costs for themselves and their customers.

As almost any busy shopper can tell you, self-service checkout can be a big time saver when lines are long at the manned checkout stations. Don't sign any such petition.

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