

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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OUR VIEW

Tribes' purchase of Hamley's a fitting conclusion

The purchase of Hamley Steakhouse and Saloon and Hamley Western Store by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation was a fitting, and satisfactory, conclusion reached last week in Portland.

The tribes decided to invest \$3.55 million to buy the facility, which is more than just an ordinary local historical landmark. The history of Hamley's runs deep in our community and even deeper into our Old West heritage.

Hamley's, which includes a western store, a coffee shop and a steakhouse, has been a part of the fabric of Pendleton — and Umatilla County — for more than 100 years.

That's why its purchase by the tribes is so significant and poignant. The tribes are our direct link with the Old West, and they drifted across the vast county rangeland for a thousand years before Pendleton existed.

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation also have proven to be able to create, manage and navigate a successful business — Wildhorse Resort & Casino.



EO Photo, File

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation purchased Hamley's restaurant, coffee shop and store at auction. The tribes was one of several interests bidding at a Portland law firm in an auction for the iconic Pendleton business, the result of the split between former Hamley's owners and business partners Blair Woodfield and Parley Pearce.

Tribes members have shopped at Hamley's since the store opened and it is comforting to know that a longtime local business is now going to remain owned by locals.

The only disappointing element to this latest local saga was the evidence

of a lingering prejudice that still manifests itself from time to time. In this case there was an undercurrent — narrow, ill-defined and, fortunately, modest — that the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation should not really be in the running to

purchase the Old West-themed store. While incredibly disappointing, those sentiments also were somewhat surprising as we are two decades into the 21st century. Prejudice, however subtly it presents itself, needs to go away.

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation did not have to buy Hamley's. The tribes did not get a "steal" of a bargain either. That is unless you consider \$3.55 million to be pocket change.

No, the tribes made a business decision, but one that exuded overtones of community service. No one wanted to see Hamley's fade away. Too much history is tied up in the store, too many memories from a large group of people linger from the iconic place.

The cold hard truth is the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation are a tremendous asset to this community. They are a tremendous asset to our state. They've done a very noble thing by stepping into purchase Hamley's. Now Hamley's stays locally owned and its future is bright. We salute the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and thank them.

OTHER VIEWS

Now the real PERS reform work begins

Bend Bulletin

While the 2019 Oregon Legislature did pass one law aimed at bringing reason to the state's Public Employees Retirement System, that effort must not be the end of the reform road. Too many problems remain, and a pair of ballot measures being prepared by former Democratic Gov. Ted Kulongoski and former Republican lawmaker Chris Telfer, who used to represent Bend in the Legislature, would strengthen the new law. They've taken a step toward getting their proposals on the ballot. Hard work remains.

The Legislature's effort, Senate Bill 1049, does a couple of things. It stretches out the length of time required to pay the state's unfunded liability in the pension system, and that should help ease the pain nearly every public employer in Oregon will face in the next few years. Of course, that's just like taking longer to pay off a credit card bill. State taxpayers will end up paying more.

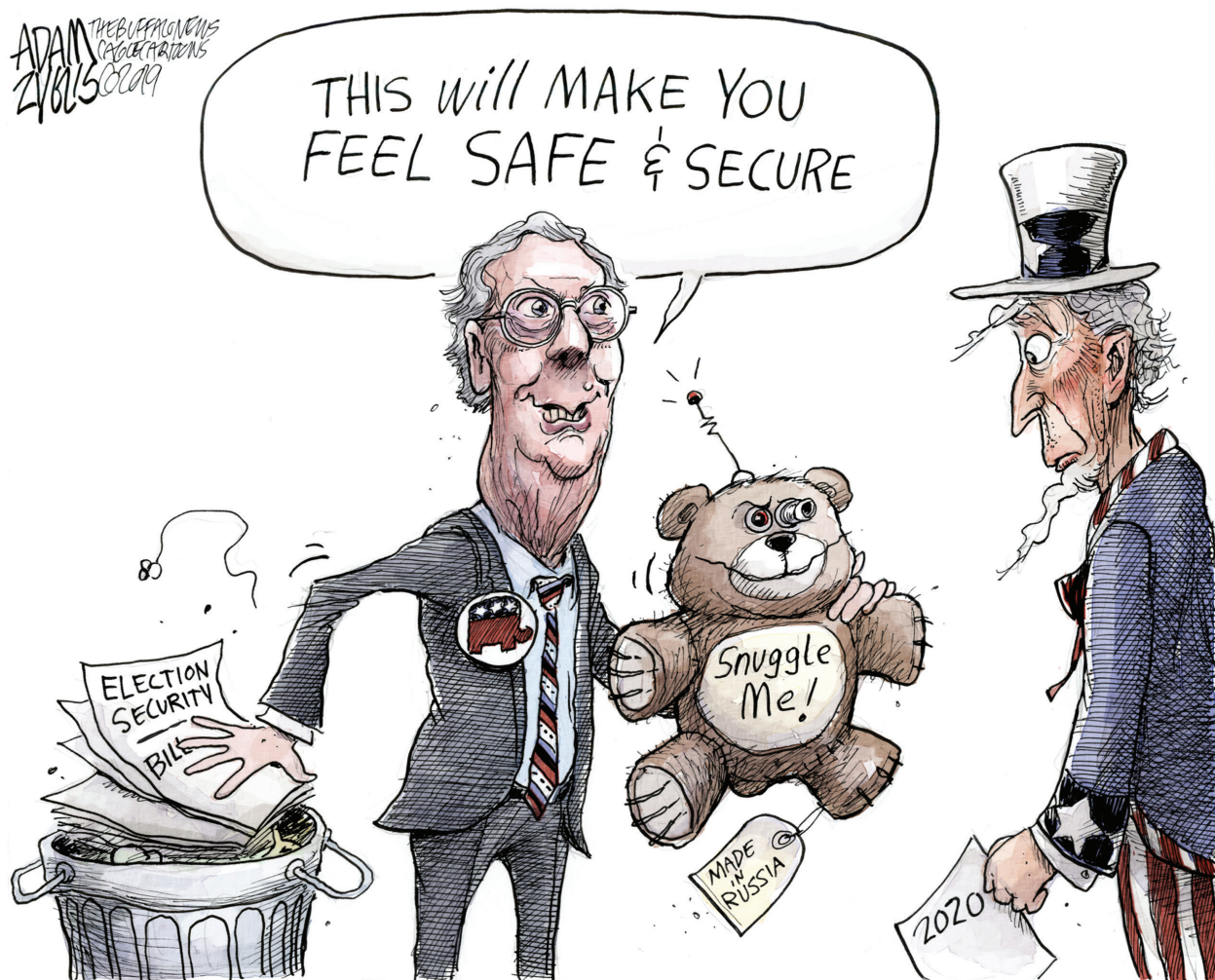
The bill also required that public employees put at least a bit of their own money into the retirement system, something they haven't done since 2004. Finally, it caps how much PERS will pay out to future employees at well under the nearly \$1 million that goes to Dr. Joe Robertson, a former head of Oregon Health & Science University. After Jan. 1 the cap is \$195,000 a year.

Those reforms are a beginning. The ballot measure efforts led by Kulongoski and Telfer would be a vital next step, and the pair is off to a good start. They have turned in the necessary 1,000 signatures for each that allows them to work on ballot titles and, ultimately, begin the job of gathering 112,020 signatures each to place them on the ballot.

Initiative Petition 22 would give new state employees an option: Join a 401(k)-style plan and contribute 6% of their salaries, matched by employer contributions, to their accounts or stay in today's plan without the current supplemental accounts now available. Again, as of July 1, 2021, they'd have to put in 6% of their own money.

IP 23 would also reinstate employee contributions to the retirement system and have lawmakers study and recommend a 401(k)-style plan for adoption.

Gathering a total of more than 224,000 signatures is no slam dunk, even with paid signature gatherers. It's a reachable goal, however, and an important part of the effort to reform PERS.



YOUR VIEWS

Chiropractic care should be part of Medicare coverage

Pendleton and Eastern Oregonian Medicare recipients need to contact Congressman Greg Walden and ask him to support and co-sponsor The Chiropractic Medicare Coverage Modernization Act, H.R. 3654, a bipartisan bill just introduced in Congress by Representatives Brian Higgins (D-NY) and Tom Reed (R-NY).

This legislation will provide Medicare patient access to all Medicare-covered benefits allowable under a chiropractor's scope of practice. America's seniors need and deserve access to chiropractic's broad-based services for common conditions that cause acute and chronic back and neck pain. However, Medicare currently will not pay for a chiropractor's consultation, physical examination, X-rays, physiotherapies, exercise therapy, etc., which of course is nonsense.

This bill does not add new services, it provides Medicare patients the freedom to access chiropractic care directly and by so doing will save the Medicare program money. A study published by the The American Board of Family Medicine (Journal of the American Board of

Family Medicine, 28(4):481-490, 2015) reported for Medicare patients with back and/or neck pain, availability of chiropractic care reduced the number of primary care physician visits, resulting in an annual savings of \$85.5 million.

Members of Congress want to hear from you, the constituent voter, more than anyone else. Seniors can contact Congressman Walden's Washington, D.C., office at 202-225-6730. Staff will answer the phone, or if you receive a recorded message, ask Greg to support H.R. 3654, The Chiropractic Medicare Coverage Modernization Act.

Dr. Vern Saboe
Oregon and American Chiropractic Association
Albany

Obesity a serious health crisis

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has released findings on obesity in the USA. The most obese state is West Virginia (38.1%), followed by Mississippi, then Oklahoma. Colorado was found to be the least obese, and Oregon comes in 31st with 29.4% of the population obese. This serious health crisis affects

some 93.3 million adults in the USA. Keep in mind, this is not overweight — this is even beyond that when a person is obese.

In 1990, less than 15% of adults were obese, but in 2010 12 states had an obesity rate of over 30%. The rate has been rising with non-Hispanic blacks, Hispanics, and Mexican Americans. The CDC has also developed the "Couch Potato Index," which accounts for adults with "zero physical leisure activity." Kentucky is first in this category with 34.4% with no exercise or activity.

This crisis is as real as the one at our southern border, as it results in more sickness, more days off of work, shortening of life expectancy, and more visits to the emergency room. The saddest part of this is that most of this is voluntary and preventable. Poor diet, including the normalization of fast foods as real meals and too many sugary drinks, combined with little or no exercise, results in a serious health crisis in the country.

The average American female now weighs almost 170 pounds, while the average male weighs about 197 pounds. I was shocked when I learned this fact — how about you?

David Burns
Pendleton