

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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OUR VIEW

Legislature poised to have big impact on ag

Agriculture is big business in Oregon. Statistics from the Oregon Department of Agriculture help build a picture of the scope:

- The state has 37,200 farms and 16 million acres in farmland;
- Oregon produces \$1.8 billion in agricultural exports;
- And Oregon is also the number one producer in the country of hazelnuts, many types of seed, Christmas trees, blueberries and rhubarb.

So what the Oregon Legislature will do in the 2020 legislative session that will alter agriculture is also a big deal. The *Capital Press* recently outlined some of the bills that are expected to change the agricultural economic outlook.

Chief among the changes will come in the proposed carbon cap legislation. Agriculture is almost always rural, which usually means added travel distances. And it also means machinery that runs on fuel is used



Courtesy photo

Though Oregon’s upcoming legislative session will only last five weeks, lawmakers are expected to revive climate legislation in 2020 after the failure of last year’s controversial proposal.

to grow, tend and harvest crops. An increase in gasoline, diesel and natural gas prices mean an increase in the cost of doing business.

One proposal floating around the Legislature is that the carbon cap bill

would gradually implement increased fuels costs in the state, starting first in the more metropolitan Portland area. In a few years, it would cover the whole state. That would give the rural parts of the state more time to

adapt before price increases hit. But the price increases will still hit.

The state’s new corporate activity tax is another area of concern for agriculture. Basically, companies bringing in more than \$1 million in Oregon have to pay \$250 plus 0.57% of those revenues in tax. The law gets tricky when it comes to crops taken to wholesalers. The crops that are sold out of state are not subject to the tax. The crops sold in state are. So once the grain is loaded into an elevator, how is that to be tracked?

Water rights are always a concern for agriculture. The Oregon Farm Bureau is watching a possible change. Under the law, an order to stop the flow to a junior water rights holder can at least be delayed while it is appealed. Senior water rights holders and tribes want that changed. Legislators won’t have an easy time resolving that dispute or any of the other changes that will impact agriculture this session.

OTHER VIEWS

Only murderers are allowed to be amateurs

Even coverage of an attempted mass shooting successfully stopped by the NRA’s “good guy with a gun” is not immune from the Opposition Media’s anti-gun agenda.

One of the bedrock beliefs of the gun-grabber crowd is the average citizen has no need to own a gun, unless the weapon is strictly for hunting and safely stored somewhere in the Fortress of Solitude. All other uses of firearms should be restricted to government-approved experts, criminals and random crazy people. Law-abiding citizens need not apply.

That’s why early reports on the shooting at the West Freeway Church of Christ — located in White Settlement, Texas — made a big deal about the hero, Jack Wilson, being a “former FBI agent.” It fit perfectly with the experts-only mindset of the OpMedia. Both the *Daily Mail* and the CBS outlet in Dallas, to name but two, highlighted that description in early coverage of the event.

ton Post asserted, “The hero in Sunday’s shooting was not, as gun advocates would want us to believe, an ordinary churchgoer ... but rather a firearms instructor and gun range owner who has been a reserve deputy with a local sheriff’s department. It’s not hard to imagine an even greater tragedy if there had been someone less skilled than Mr. Wilson.”

A hysterical editorial page writer at the *Arizona Republic* echoed that sentiment: “In other words, he’s exactly the kind of man you want around with a firearm. But we know nothing about the at least six other parishioners who also appeared to draw their handguns at West Freeway Church. ... And that’s terrifying.”

Mike “Big Nanny” Bloomberg — Democrat presidential candidate and moneybags behind Everytown for Gun Confiscation — even weighed in. When asked

about the shooting he opined that, “It’s the job of law enforcement to have guns and decide when to shoot. We just do not want the average citizen carrying a gun in a crowded place.”

In other words, Bloomberg’s message for the 247 members in the congregation when the random crazy person opened up with a shotgun was leave it to the experts.

Judging by the video of the shooting, Wilson has kept his firearms instructor license current. But in spite of what the credential-crazy media would have you believe, he hasn’t been in law enforcement for over 33 years and his range closed in 2016. Wilson’s definitely better than the average bear, but he’s not John Wick.

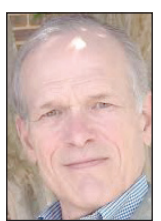
And if Wilson had not been attending church that day, I’m guessing the congregation would have been happy if any of the other six armed parishioners had engaged the shooter. Particularly when the only other choice was to wait nine or more minutes for the experts to arrive.

It’s really not that complicated. People with concealed carry permits carry a gun because they’re too weak to tote a cop.

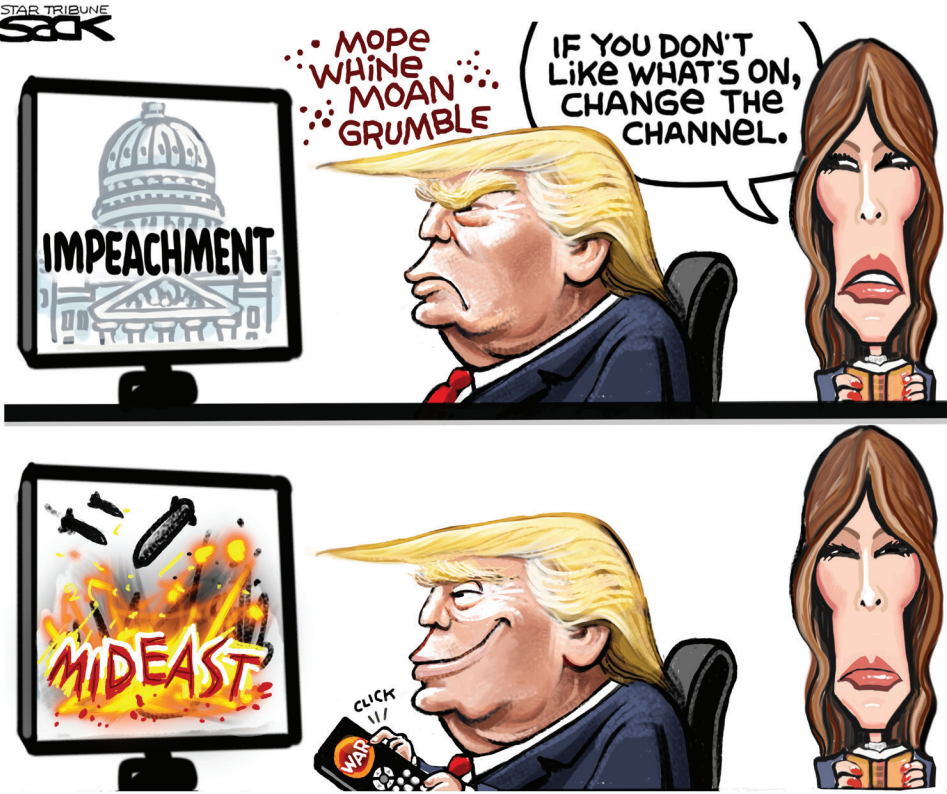
It’s been said time is money, but time is also life during an emergency. This idea that Americans can outsource their personal defense to the authorities is false. You are personally responsible for your family’s immediate safety. The gunfight inside West Freeway Church of Christ lasted only six seconds because the congregation had immediate responders who didn’t wait for first responders.

And that made all the difference.

Michael Shannon is a syndicated columnist.



MICHAEL SHANNON
COMMENT



YOUR VIEWS

Congress must check Trump’s recklessness

I’m horrified and irate that Trump ordered the assassination of Gen. Qassim Suleimani, a top commander in Iran’s Revolutionary Guards Corps. This would be equivalent to a foreign government assassinating our vice president outside the Toronto airport.

This was not a defensive action, and comes at a time of escalating tensions with Iran. We need skilled diplomacy with Iran, not an isolated, erratic nut with a trigger. The U.S. Constitution specifically tasks Congress with decisions on war, so where are they?

In recent years, and despite Trump’s thorough incompetence and dangerousness as a leader, Congress has ceded authority over the military to the Executive Branch.

Congress is a co-equal branch of government that holds tremendous power to check Trump’s recklessness. Congress must step in immediately to rein in Trump’s catastrophic escalation to war with Iran. Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, and Rep. Greg Walden, we need you to clearly and unequivocally state that you condemn this strike and are opposed to war with Iran. Trump has positioned us on the precipice of war, and Congress may be our only hope of stopping it.

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