

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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OUR VIEW

Draft a wish list for your Oregon legislators

Today we'd like you to draft a multi-million-dollar wish list and send it off to your Oregon state senator and state representative.

Each of Oregon's 30 senators can spend \$4 million in federal funding — almost as they please. And each of the 60 members of the House has command of \$2 million.

Who knows better than you where it should be spent? Or at least, they should listen to your suggestions and thank you for them.

The total \$240 million comes courtesy of the federal American Rescue Plan Act. This deal for spreading around the money was struck to keep Democrats and Republicans in the Oregon Legislature focused on passing legislation, not fighting. All the lists submitted may well be rounded up into what they call a Christmas tree bill, so everybody's goodies are rolled into one. That way the bill will surely pass.

Now you could be a penny pincher and tell your Oregon legislators not to spend a penny. You have to know, though, other legislators won't let the money sit around. They will spend it. Might as well take local control of the money. The overall state budget is in good shape. The early session pandemic financial fretting melted away with the spring, because the total Oregon is expected to get from the federal rescue plan is some \$2.6 billion.

One-time spending of \$4 million or \$2 million can't fix affordable housing in Umatilla County.

It can't fix wildfire risk in the Blue Mountains. It won't build enough child care centers or preschools to eliminate the shortage. It won't fix the critical groundwater shortage in the Columbia Basin.

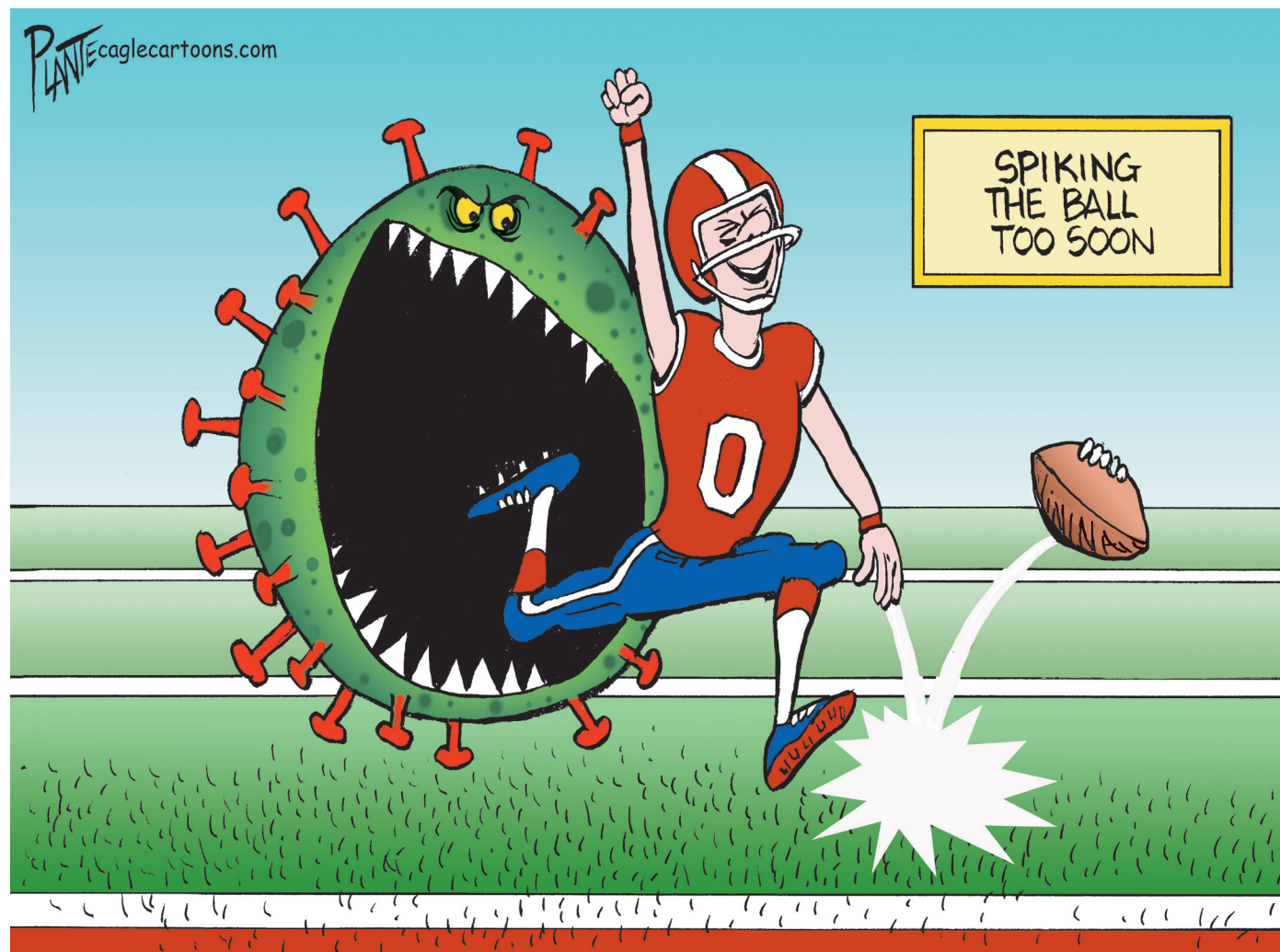
There are a lot of things it won't do; some targeted dollars, though, can change lives.

It perhaps makes sense not to spend it on hiring people for new jobs or to start up new programs. How do you pay for them next year? That said, it might make sense to spend it on a pilot program if there's a good idea that needs testing out.

There's such a big need for so many things it's not going to be easy to divvy up a few million. Are some needs more acute right now? Would it help to spend some more to encourage more people to get vaccinated? Is there a program in the schools that could make a real difference for students who lost learning because of the pandemic? Could something be done to help keep businesses operating? Is there anything needed for public safety training? Affordable housing, fighting child abuse, homelessness and so many more ideas that we have not mentioned also are deserving.

It's not going to be so easy for legislators to pick. You may have a good idea that your legislator never thought of. You may have a good idea that your legislator is on the fence about. Let them know.

If you are not sure who your legislator is, you can enter your address at this website: oregonlegislature.gov/FindYourLegislator/leg-districts.html and it will tell you. Click on their name and their email address should pop up. Then plan your wish list.



Why voting to join Idaho is the right choice



MIKE
MCCARTER
OTHER VIEWS

This May, voters in five counties of Eastern Oregon will be deciding whether to entrust the future of their children and their communities to the governance of an enlarged Idaho or to the unhinged politicians of Salem.

The Idaho legislature is controlled by representatives from rural districts, who govern according to the concerns and priorities of rural counties.

The ruling party in the Oregon House doesn't have a single representative from Eastern Oregon or any rural district. Since the ruling party doesn't consult the other party, Eastern Oregon is completely ignored.

Long after Kate Brown is out of office, her replacements will continue to act on the priorities and values of Northwestern Oregon because that area has 79% of Oregon's voters. This is why Oregon hasn't elected a Republican

governor in 38 years, and Democrats have a super-majority in both houses of the Oregon Legislature.

You might be a Democrat, but most Eastern Oregon Democrats don't want Eastern Oregon to be ruled by the kind of Portland politicians who won't or can't stand up to the relentless advancement of radical leftist proposals. They don't understand how we make a living. Their decisions damage industries like timber, mining, trucking and farming.

"The ruling party in Salem has a vision of the future that does not include people like me or the rural culture of my community, friends, and family," said former Speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives Mark Simmons of Union County. "It is time to part ways with them by every legal means available to us."

Voting patterns prove that Eastern, Central and Southern Oregon do not belong in Oregon. It's bigger than politics — it's our culture. These areas gave two votes to Trump for every Hillary or Biden vote, just like Idaho.

Our counties would be better off as parts of Idaho. Oregon schools rank

37th in the nation. Idaho's schools rank 23rd, according to U.S. News. Idaho is the state with the eighth smallest tax burden, and Oregon ranks 33rd, according to taxfoundation.org. Idaho has a much lower cost of living. In March, the U.S. government ranking of 50 states on unemployment rate showed Idaho ranked fifth and Oregon 31st.

Idaho is not a sanctuary state, nor does it give driver's licenses to illegal aliens. Taxpayers there aren't forced to pay for abortions.

Rural Oregon is in an abusive relationship with Willamette Valley. Their leaders refuse to protect citizens from rioters, arsonists, criminals and illegal aliens, but they infringe on your right to defend your family with firearms. The public school curriculum teaches the next generation to hate Americans and Americanism.

It's time to end this abusive relationship.

Mike McCarter of La Pine is a veteran and a former president of the Oregon Agribusiness Council and Oregon Association of Nurserymen.

YOUR VIEWS

Support public safety with Measure 30-148

I'm writing in support of Measure 30-148 to fund critical equipment, vehicles, and facilities in Umatilla County Fire District No. 1. These will keep firefighters and emergency medical technicians safe in line of duty and ensure their ability to respond when an emergency arises.

Nothing is more important than safety when it comes to the men and women who risk their lives to protect their community. Having modern equipment and vehicles at the ready ensures these first responders can perform at their best.

Because western Umatilla County is growing so quickly, the call volume increases every year. This bond will keep a high level of service and allow UCFD1 to plan for the future.

Please join me in supporting this bond and the men and women of Umatilla County Fire District No. 1.

Terry Rowan
Hermiston

Gregg shows up for Pendleton every day

I write to show my wholehearted support for Patrick Gregg in the upcoming election for the Pendleton School Board Position 7.

I have had the opportunity to get to know Patrick professionally over the last few years and have been able to see firsthand his ability to analyze and navigate tough situations. His work ethic and his dedication to the city of Pendleton are unparalleled. Patrick shows up for Pendleton every day. Patrick has three beautiful children

LETTERS DEADLINE FOR MAY 18 ELECTIONS

The *East Oregonian* does not run endorsements of more than 400 words. The *East Oregonian* will institute a deadline for letters to the editor, so we can be fair with all the letters we receive and allow for responses before Election Day, if necessary. We run local letters of endorsement on a first-come, first-served basis. Please submit your endorsement letters to the editor by 5 p.m. on Friday, May 7. You can email them to editor@eastoregonian.com, or mail them to *East Oregonian*, c/o Andrew Cutler, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. We will publish our last letters on Saturday, May 15. Any letters received after the deadline will not run. Election Day is May 18.

with his wife, Jill, who are attending, or soon will be attending, school in Pendleton. Patrick has always expressed his passion about the importance of education. With all three of his children soon attending school, I believe it is in his nature as a person to do what is most important, not only for the future education of his children, but for the Pendleton School District as a whole.

I trust that Patrick will make informed and well thought-out decisions for the Pendleton School District, and I trust that Patrick will make decisions that directly benefit the education of our children, create a safe and diverse educational setting, and to support and protect the livelihoods of our teachers.

If elected to the Pendleton School Board Position 7, I have no doubt in my mind Patrick will fill the position remarkably.

Eva Smith
Pendleton

Support first responders who keep us safe

When there's a fire, a wreck, a medical emergency, a hazardous spill, or any number of other potentially disastrous

situations, local firefighters and EMTs are usually the first ones on the scene. They often put their own health and safety on the line to help others.

Measure 30-148 is the west end community's chance to give back to our first responders, now and for the next 20 years. The bond package includes new protective equipment, radio systems, vehicles, and other tools that protect firefighters and EMTs.

It also includes upgrades to current vehicle exhaust systems to reduce the cancer risk. Protecting these valiant first responders now, and in the long run, is crucial. They responded to 5,000 emergencies last year. If my math is correct, they grabbed their gear and rolled out in response to more than 13 alarms per day!

For around \$4 a month, the average property owner in Umatilla County Fire District #1 can make a vital investment in the safety of our firefighting and medical first responders. As a rural resident, where time and distance are especially critical, that makes a lot of sense to me.

Join me in voting yes on Measure 30-148.

Cathy Stolz
Hermiston