

OUR VIEW

Should Oregon expand betting?

The Oregon Lottery's mission is contradictory: make money off gambling and don't encourage people to gamble too much.

Launching sports betting was one way the lottery tried to expand its revenue. It has the potential to grow. But that could represent some challenging policy choices.

Lottery officials moved into sports betting because, well, there is money to be made. And arguably it helps the Oregon Lottery balance its competing missions. It would like to have more people gambling a little than a few gambling a lot.

And it doesn't want people to be gambling away money they should be spending on more important things. Sports bettors tend to be younger, male and have money to spend.

When you look at the numbers, sports betting still is just a fraction of Oregon Lottery revenues. It's new. For instance, the lottery's monthly net profit for June was \$59 million.

Video lottery brought in most of the net revenue at \$98 million. Traditional lottery tickets such as Powerball and Scratch-Its brought in \$10.4 million. Sports betting trailed with \$2.8 million.

(It's not particularly relevant for a discussion about sports betting policy, but we were curious about how much of the money spent was returned in prizes to lottery customers. Video lottery has the highest percentage at 92%. About 65% of money spent on traditional lottery tickets was returned in prizes. And sports betting is at 89%. Those are numbers we crunched based on June 2021.)

You can drill down a bit in the data from sports betting. For instance, you can see in August there was one bet for \$30 on a chess match. That was the only bet on chess.

The profit margin for the state on chess was 10%. There was one bet for \$8 on surfing. The margin for the state -773%. Most of the bets placed in August were on baseball with 198,276 bets. The margin for the state was 4.5%.

The Oregon Lottery tries to walk a tightrope with sports betting. Take betting on the Olympics. You could not bet on individual events that included minors. But you could bet on subjects such as the overall medal counts, which would include minors.

Still, moving the state into sports betting made some Oregonians and Oregon lawmakers uncomfortable. The Oregon Lottery proposed going into collegiate sports. No dice. Too controversial. No betting is allowed on high school sports.

Other states, such as Pennsylvania, allow more forms of gambling online than in Oregon. It's not a casino on your phone. It's close.

Should Oregon allow betting on college sports? Should it offer more games on people's phones? It would mean more revenue for the state. Would that be too much? Or is Oregon already allowing too much?



Carbon fee, dividend correct a market failure



STEVE GHAN

OTHER VIEWS

Our civilization has benefited greatly from the use of fossil fuel to power our lives, for which I am grateful. Unfortunately, scientific investigation has made it clear the carbon dioxide emitted as a byproduct of fossil fuel combustion is warming our climate far beyond the stable climate in which our civilization thrived over the last 10,000 years.

As a former editor-in-chief of a major climate journal, I can say this conclusion is well established.

These changes are affecting regional agriculture and farmers. Just lately the Capital Press has reported:

- "Heat shrinks Pacific Northwest hops yield."
- "Scorching heat challenges Oregon pear growers."
- "Northwest potato farmers clobbered by weather."
- "Severe drought devastates Washington state's wheat crop."
- "U.S. unveils plan to address 'silent killer' extreme heat."
- "Washington state sets new rule for farm workers in wildfire smoke."
- "Washington state sets heat rule for farmworkers."
- "Oregon OSHA investigates death of farmworker."
- "Convoy delivers hay donations to Southern Oregon."
- "The Big Dry: Drought, water shortage 'tear at fabric' of Klamath Basin."
- A reader said chickens were killed by the heat wave.

And The Oregonian has reported:

- "Oregon farm worker dies during heat wave."
- "Record heat wave scorches crops across Oregon and drought could worsen loss to growers."
- "Receding Eastern Oregon reservoir nears record low."
- "Climate change and hot dry summers mean big trouble for Oregon's trees."
- "Northwest trees sapped by Oregon and Washington heat waves..."
- "Wells run dry in many Klamath Basin homes."
- A reader in the The Dalles said half of their cherry crop was ruined by the heat wave.

The millennial-frequency drought and heat wave have hit our region hard.

Fortunately, research and development has led to the availability of competitive technologies that are not reliant on fossil fuels: heat pumps, air conditioners, electric and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles and tractors, and electricity production from nuclear reactors, hydroelectric dams, solar panels, wind turbines and more.

A carbon fee, returned to the economy in equal shares of the total revenue to all Americans in monthly carbon dividend checks, is an economic method to correct the market failure whereby the impacts and costs of carbon emissions are borne by the public — through heat-wave deaths, drought and heat crop losses — including loss of irrigation water, wildfire smoke health impacts and destruction of property — higher taxes and higher insurance premiums to pay for recovery from catastrophic climate disasters. The carbon fee helps the public by disincentivizing the burning of fossil fuels, emissions of carbon and the associated harm to the public.

The uniform carbon dividend ensures government doesn't grow and is a simple albeit imperfect way to compensate taxpayers, insurance premium payers and the direct victims of climate (and health) impacts.

If the carbon fee is applied near where it enters the economy, the price signal spreads through the entire economy, making carbon-intensive products more expensive. But since consumers, businesses and utilities now have alternatives to such products, carbon-free products are more competitive and are therefore chosen by more consumers, businesses and utilities. Consumers can use their carbon dividend to cover the higher cost of carbon-intensive products, or to invest in carbon-free technology to avoid paying the passed-on carbon fee. Most families would receive more carbon dividend than they pay in the carbon fee. The carbon fee and dividend is a simple and effective way to disincentivize carbon emissions without prescriptive regulations.

In the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (HR 2307), the fee on ag fuel is rebated. A border adjustment makes importers pay tariffs on goods if their country lacks an effective climate policy, which drives countries such as China to also price carbon and U.S. manufacturers to keep production in the U.S.

The carbon fee and dividend does not prohibit anything. Freedom of choice is preserved, the market failure corrected and our climate saved for us and future generations.

Steve Ghan of Richland, Washington, leads the Tri-Cities Chapter of the Citizens Climate Lobby. He meets with mid-Columbia farmers to discuss agriculture and climate change.

YOUR VIEWS

Tribal newspaper censoring is a violation of free speech

Free speech and free expression are basic principles and rights of the people in a democratic and free society.

However, for the tribal people and citizens of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, these are privileges that will be granted only if we march in lock-step to tribal government doctrine and with the approval of tribally paid administration employees who have appointed themselves to be the gatekeepers of our individual rights.

In July 2021, I submitted an opinion letter to the tribal newspaper, the Confederated Umatilla Journal, on a relevant tribal public issue. However, the de facto CUJ editorial board, comprised of all paid employees, wrongfully censored it. The East Oregonian newspaper has been the primary source of news and information for our tribal community for generations. So when my opinion letter was refused by the CUJ, I submitted it to the EO, and it was published there in a timely manner.

My letter contained no defamation, slander or libel, no threats, nothing vulgar, did not compromise confidentiality, nor was otherwise improper or inappropriate in any way that warranted censorship. Otherwise, the EO would never have published it.

Thus, common sense makes it very clear and obvious the content of my letter was the reason the de facto

editorial board, comprised of then-interim Executive Director Paul Rabb, then-communications director Matt Johnson, CUJ publisher Jane Hill and CUJ editor Cary Rosenbaum, unjustifiably censored my letter.

Yes, my letter included some mild criticism of tribal policy, but that does not justify censorship by any means. Civil rights have never had much priority for the CTUIR. Back in 2010, as a member of the Board of Trustees, I led the successful effort to overturn and repeal the random drug testing policy for tribal employees.

The policy allowed tribal government to drug test employees without probable cause or suspicion. The policy basically held the employee was guilty until proven innocent, in complete contradiction to the time-honored principle of being innocent until proven guilty.

I have been consulting with a local attorney on this current censorship situation and we may soon be filing violation of free speech charges in the appropriate court.

Bob Shippentower
Pendleton

Homeless shelters are a 'bandage on a gaping wound'

I think it would be in the best interest of Umatilla County to think in terms of an it-takes-a-village-approach when planning the homeless encampment. Most people take the approach that get

the homeless off the streets and out of sight. Put a roof over their heads and keep them out of the elements.

That is just putting a bandage on a gaping wound. To effect real change you have to address the root cause of the homelessness. This is where you need a village to address the issues.

I would seek out input from various community stakeholders. They include but are not limited to Veterans Affairs, the Oregon Department of Human Services, mental health, additions services, employment department and faith-based groups. Each of these organizations can provide support both in terms of financial assistance and support services.

I found out years ago that many of the community stakeholders provide like services. If we assign a case manager to each homeless person they will be able to build a comprehensive case plan for each individual. The goal would be to address the issues that caused the homelessness, find stable employment and housing.

A good many of the homeless have mental health issues, some are veterans, some have addiction issues, and some are hopeless. Most people who are homeless do it not by choice but they are out of options. Umatilla County has a great opportunity to build a good program if they think outside the box. Just my thoughts.

Joe Mesteth
Hermiston

EDITORIALS

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.

LETTERS

The East Oregonian welcomes original letters of 400 words or less on public issues and public policies for publication in the newspaper and on our website. The newspaper reserves the right to withhold letters that address concerns about individual services and products or letters that infringe on the rights of private citizens. Letters must be signed by the author and include the city of residence and a daytime phone number. The phone number will not be published. Unsigned letters will not be published.

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