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OUR VIEW

Will new climate policy create bad incentives?

The story is that, in colonial India, the British governor wanted to get rid of the cobras in Delhi. He set a bounty. It was high enough that people started raising cobras to make money.

It's what people call the cobra effect or perverse incentives. The best plans motivated by the best of intentions can go awry.

One of the best plans with the best of intentions in Oregon is arguably from Gov. Kate Brown.

If Oregon gets it right, the new climate friendly housing and transportation policies Brown ordered for the state will lead to a much changed state.

More dense housing. More mixed-use development. Taller buildings. More use of bikes, walking and transit. Less parking.

More focus on looking at policies through an equity lens.

State committees are writing the rules and regulations to require those kinds of changes right now.

That may not be the kind of place you dream of living in. But the motivation is to transform the state into something that reduces the impact on climate change, is more equitable and is just a smarter way for people to live and get to and from where they need to go.

A challenge the proposed changes face is creating perverse incentives. For instance, by compelling larger communities in Oregon, such as the greater Bend area, to adhere to the new policies, will it drive people, businesses and development into areas that don't face the most demanding requirements?

Think about an example. The proposed rules will require larger areas to focus development in what are called climate friendly areas. That is where 30% of needed housing will need to be built. In Bend, maybe that would be in the city's core.

Requirements for housing might become more dense than they are now. Rules would discourage the use of cars and encourage the use of bikes, walking and transit.

If Bend wanted to expand its urban growth boundary under the proposed rules, it would need to identify a new climate friendly area within the city's current limits to meet half of the housing needed. The other half would be allowed in the expansion.

Will people want to live in more concentrated development? Some will. Others may look to move where the limits don't apply.

Developers may find it easier to build where the requirements may be less stringent. Businesses may want to locate there, too. Smaller communities in Oregon below 10,000 in population or 5,000 in population where the rules will be more flexible may see an influx of growth. That wouldn't exactly be what Brown intended.

Maybe it will never happen like that. But how will policymakers design the rules to avoid it?



Who really has their head in the sand?



TAMMY
MALGESINI
INSIDE MY SHOES

I'm afraid Pendleton Chamber of Commerce President Velda Arnaud is going to suffocate if she remains steadfast to her recent statement in a letter to chamber members.

"I will be sticking my head in the sand until some sense of sanity returns to the world," she wrote.

I joked with one of my friends that there goes her Supreme Court nomination, but it's no laughing matter. I am amazed in this day and age that Arnaud would think it's perfectly fine to refuse to use a person's preferred pronoun, saying she "worked too hard to learn English grammar to just willy-nilly make changes."

The English language is constantly changing. I still recall the first time I heard alternate usage of the word "sick." My husband and I were in a ski shop in Colorado and the clerk said John's shirt was sick. Initially, I thought the dude didn't like it, but when he asked where I bought it, he went on about how awesome it was.

And just like "The Times They Are A-Changin'," written by Bob Dylan in the early 1960s, the times continue to change. If my 82-year-old conservative Christian mom can have an open mind, I would think that 60-something Arnaud could retrain herself.

In her philosophy of education, available via a link from her instructor page on the Blue Mountain Community College website, Arnaud states, "It's the instructor's job to encourage and help students grow, not to put them down."

And she further states, "Another thing that is important to teach our students is that each one of them has value. While we cannot necessarily eliminate low self-esteem, I feel that we can increase self-confidence."

It seems Arnaud has made a connection with students, being recognized in the May 2021 Staff Spotlight by the BMCC Associated Student Government. Maybe it's time for Arnaud's students to become her teachers.

My parents, who live in Coos Bay, don't have internet access. However, they watch the news and when they don't understand something, they ask. I have explained such things as Uber and social media platforms, as well as nonbinary and pangender.

A few years ago when a former high school football player came out as a transgender woman a couple of months prior to my 40-year high school reunion, I talked about Marcia with my mom. We recently discussed having no real understanding of what it must have been like for Marcia growing up and living the majority of her adult life as a male.

We discussed that the least we can do is honor people's wishes by addressing them by their preferred pronouns. Somewhat surprised by my mom's response, I said, "Well, aren't you progressive?"

I'm proud of my mom. While she may not understand, she's willing to accept people for who they are.

Marcia died due to complications from gallbladder surgery in November 2020. I'm glad she was able to live her last few years as her authentic self and felt love and acceptance from her family, friends and former classmates — including being addressed with her preferred pronouns.

Tammy Malgesini, the East Oregonian community writer, enjoys spending time with her husband and two German shepherds, as well as entertaining herself with random musings.

YOUR VIEWS

Put your hatred of Trump aside

This is in reference to Mr. Bob Shippentower's letter in the Jan. 18 edition of the East Oregonian ("Charge former President Trump with criminal conduct") in which he suggested that Donald Trump should be charged with felony manslaughter for his role in the Jan. 6 riots during which seven people died.

As in most of his rants against Trump in the last five years, he offers no facts or proof that Trump was responsible for any of what happened on Jan. 6.

He references the fact that President Joe Biden and U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland place the blame on Trump as his proof.

Of the seven deaths, Shippentower references only one directly related to the violence, and that was an unarmed female protestor shot by an armed government employee. The rest were of natural causes, according to most news sources.

I wonder where his outrage is over the riots following George Floyd's death and the failure of officials to charge people for the deaths, destruction and devastation caused by these thugs? I guess it's

because he can't blame "The Donald." I do hope for his sake that he can put his hatred for Trump aside and get on with his life.

Walt Jarvie
Pendleton

Idaho Power avoids the full story

The headline in the East Oregonian on Jan. 19, 2022: "Power Companies announce deal on B2H" doesn't tell the full story. It should read: "BPA pulls out of ownership of the B2H; enters into transmission agreement."

After 16 years of analysis, the Bonneville Power Administration decided that owning a portion of the Boardman to Hemingway transmission line was not financially viable for them. Instead, in order to serve their customers in southeast Idaho, the BPA will give some unneeded equipment and transmission rights in return for lower wheeling charges (the fee to move energy on other companies' transmission lines).

In return, Idaho Power must absorb BPA's share of 24%, bringing Idaho Power's total share from 21% to 45%, more than doubling their cost. The

public knew BPA was withdrawing from ownership of the B2H in 2019 when Idaho Power informed the state utility commissions. In 2021 the Oregon Public Utility Commission told Idaho Power to recalculate B2H's budget to show PacifiCorp 54% ownership and Idaho Power's 45% ownership, adjusted for inflation. The budget of \$1.2 billion was developed in 2016. It is significantly outdated. In Idaho Power's most recent filing to the Oregon Public Utility Commission in December, there is still no budget documentation. Idaho Power says it will provide a transmission supplement with a detailed analysis in the first quarter of 2022. The company must still be crunching the numbers, attempting to justify its ability to finance almost half the B2H transmission line.

Idaho Power expects us to accept that doubling its financial obligations will still be the least cost/least risk scenario for customers. Meanwhile they continue plans to pillage the landscape of Eastern Oregon while serving landowners pre-condemnation papers for a project that is still years from approval. I don't trust them and neither should you.

Jim Kreider
La Grande