

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

ANDREW CUTLER
Publisher/Editor

KATHRYN B. BROWN
Owner

ERICK PETERSON
Hermiston Editor/Senior Reporter

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OUR VIEW

No easy answers to tough issues

The lack of thought toward unintended consequences are becoming a hallmark of legislation, and lawmakers need to spend more time examining the broader implications of a bill before it gains approval.

The problem is not just central to Oregon but a national challenge as well.

A good case in point is a bill that already moved through the Oregon Senate that would restrict police from pulling over drivers for minor traffic miscues such as a burned-out taillight.

The legislation is designed to diminish the often lop-sided and inconsistent impact of the justice system on people of color in the state.

The bill would restrict officers from beginning a traffic stop for a single broken taillight, a broken taillight, a broken brake light and other minor infractions.

Is it proper and right for lawmakers to tackle racial issues that impact our state's minorities? Definitely.

Does this bill do that? Perhaps.

The bill also, though, may needlessly complicate the job of law enforcement. That job already is difficult, and adding such restrictions could create unintended consequences and, in the end, never really address the main issue — racial injustice.

There is always the tendency with such measures to see it as a knee-jerk reaction to a broader, and more complex problem.

Another good example at the federal level is the River Democracy Act sponsored by Oregon U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden and Sen. Jeff Merkley.

The legislation would add more than 4,000 miles of rivers and streams to the national Wild and scenic Rivers system.

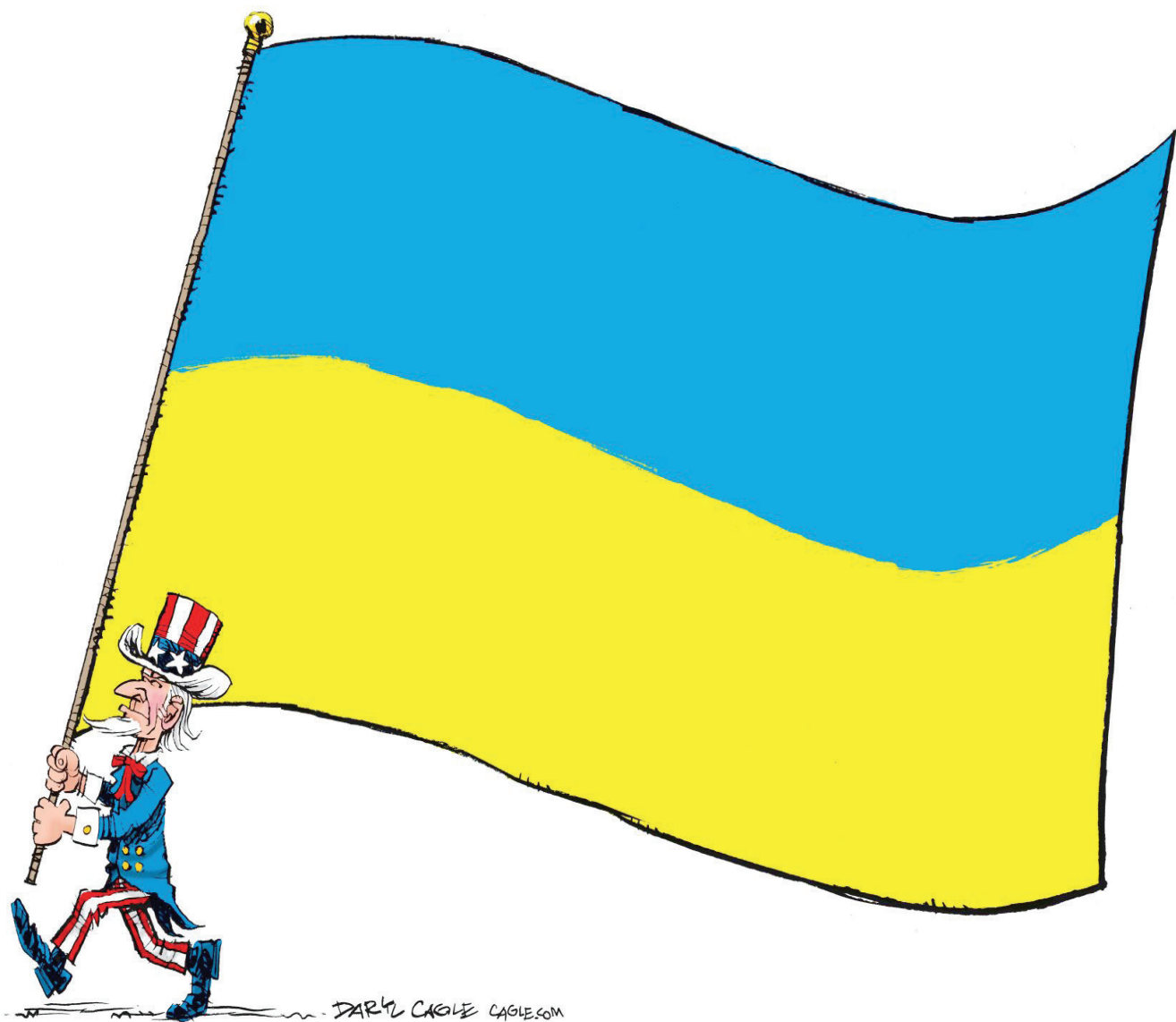
Is it a good idea to protect our wildlands? Yes, it is. Is this proposed legislation the right answer: Maybe?

Then again, it could create a host of unintended consequences that will impact families, farmers and ranchers in the rural sections of the state.

The aim of the bill is noble. We do need to protect our rivers and streams. But did anyone play that particular reel all the way to end to see what could be an unintended consequence?

Lawmakers need to think carefully, thoughtfully, when the good idea fairly appears. What may look like an easy answer to a complicated problem may, in the end, create more challenges that have fewer answers.

We expect our elected leaders to not only advocate for us but to think clearly about the future. Saving wildlands and attacking racism are difficult issues that deserve more than a fast, arbitrary answer.



YOUR VIEWS

Lessons learned from conflict in Ukraine

The recent barbaric invasion of Ukraine has reinforced two things: 1) We always need an extremely strong military; 2) We always need to be 100% energy self-sufficient, and have the ability to supply others as needed.

A very strong military needs to always be in place to help prevent lunatic world leaders from flexing their muscles on a peaceful world. Bullies such as Russian President Vladimir Putin will roll over any country or coalition that doesn't have the ability to push back, and a strong military gives us that ability. Only irrational people want war, but sometimes you need to prepare for it to prevent it, as irrational as that sounds.

Along with many of our allies, we import a great deal of oil and natural gas from Russia. This needs to stop as we are financing this brutal regime and its insane assault on Ukraine. We have the oil and natural gas reserves in this country and we need to tap into them, now. That means opening up some more of our land for extracting oil and natural gas, and have the refineries working overtime. I realize this goes against the grain of the green movement, but these atrocities need to stop, and cutting off

their income from oil, along with other sanctions, will put more pressure on the Russians.

The oil and gas is getting used either way, and I'd much rather we supply it than enable Putin's war machine.

Scott Erwin
Redmond

Vote Susan Bower for county commissioner

I would like to write a letter to the editor in support of Susan Bower for Umatilla County commissioner. I have known Susan for approximately nine years and I have found her to be smart, honest and bright. She knows finances having formally been an investment banker and she knows how to work with others to make good things happen.

If you will notice, Susan is the one who has organized a crew to go down to the Shearer's Foods plant, Hermiston, and help distribute much needed food stuffs to the 230 workers who were displaced by the recent fire that destroyed that plant. Susan cares about the common man and as county commissioner she will work to find someone else who is willing to come into Umatilla County and develop an industry that will employ any of those 230

employees who have not found jobs yet.

As a former investment banker, who cracked the "Good Ole Boys" board room, she knows finances and where and how to get the needed capitol to bring Umatilla County back on the map as the place to come and raise your family. She and her husband, Dr. Andrew Bower, looked at several cities before they settled on Pendleton and they did so because as Andy said, "this feels like home."

I would hope that when you go to the polls you will remember one thing: We need a leader like Susan Bower who isn't afraid to tackle hard projects and has the people skills to ensure that the right people are tapped to make any project a success. Susan also has the knowledge to know where to look for financing to do things like road repairs, infrastructure upgrades and much more.

Susan also has the skills to know when something doesn't look right or that there is something wrong and has the skill set to find the right person to fix the problem.

When election day comes please vote Susan Bower for county commissioner Position 1 and bring back the "get'er done" attitude that Umatilla County used to have.

Barbara Ann Wright
Pendleton

CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES

U.S. PRESIDENT

Joe Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500
Comments: 202-456-1111

U.S. SENATORS

Ron Wyden
221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-5244
La Grande office: 541-962-7691

Jeff Merkley
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-3753
Pendleton office: 541-278-1129

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE

Cliff Bentz
2185 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-6730
Medford office: 541-776-4646

GOVERNOR

Kate Brown
160 State Capitol
900 Court St.
Salem, OR 97301-4047
503-378-4582

REPRESENTATIVES

Bobby Levy, District 58
900 Court St. NE, H-376
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1458
Rep.BobbyLevy@state.or.us

Greg Smith, District 57
900 Court St. NE, H-482
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1457
Rep.GregSmith@state.or.us

SENATOR

Bill Hansell, District 29
900 Court St. NE, S-415
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1729
Sen.BillHansell@state.or.us

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SEND LETTERS TO:

editor@eastoregonian.com,
or via mail to Andrew Cutler,
211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801