

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

ANDREW CUTLER
Publisher/Editor

KATHRYN B. BROWN
Owner

ERICK PETERSON
Hermiston Editor/Senior Reporter

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OUR VIEW

Voters want results from their elected officials

Our elected leaders on both sides of the aisles politically need to do much more to realign themselves with the middle ground of America and shun the high-powered rhetoric and shouts of the lunatic fringe in our great society.

True, everyone in our nation has the right to express an opinion, and that right is a sacred one that must be guarded. However, during the past decade it seems those who sit on the opposite poles of the right and left have gained new prominence, their voices louder, their dogma more militant.

In the Oregon Legislature there is a clear divide among Democrats and Republicans with the GOP vastly outnumbered and relegated to an ineffective minority. The state assembly political roster mirrors our own national stage politics in the sense there apparently exists a wide gulf between what each side wants and desires. In Oregon, the majority Democrats have the power and use it in ways lawmakers believe their constituents want.

Usually, when major political conflicts erupt, Republican lawmakers face few alternatives other than simply leaving the building to erase a quorum needed for votes.

That means, essentially, that on really critical issues, the normal discourse needed by a democracy to succeed breaks down. One side gains the advantage, or in Oregon's case at times, one side is left standing alone on the dance floor while the other is long gone from the building.

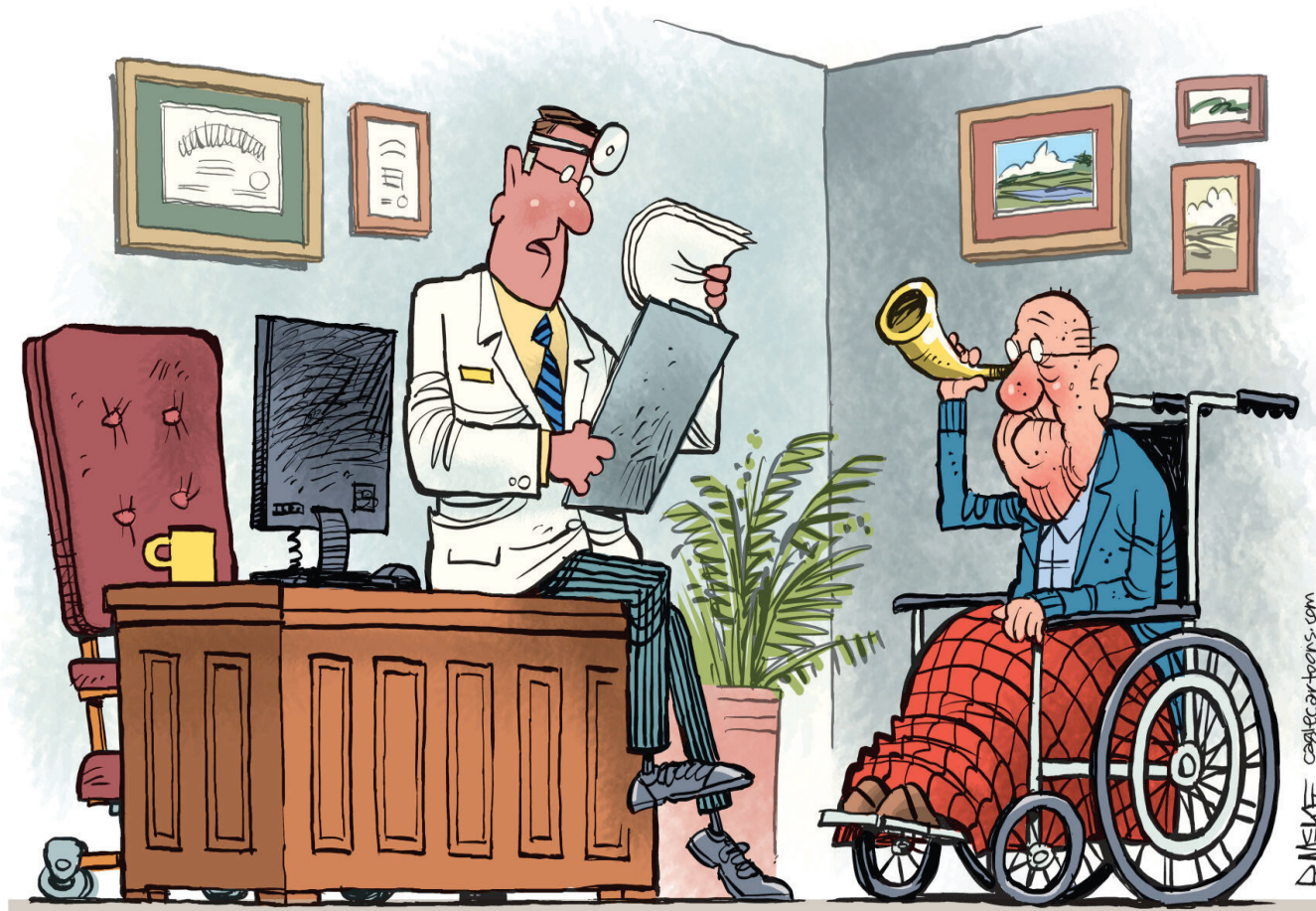
What those types of actions accomplish is little for the voters and create a wider dissatisfaction that continues to grow.

Oregonians have shown in polls they want more out of this year's gubernatorial race than the usual name-calling added to a good dose of fear-mongering from the lunatic fringe of both parties. Voters don't want more fighting. They want results.

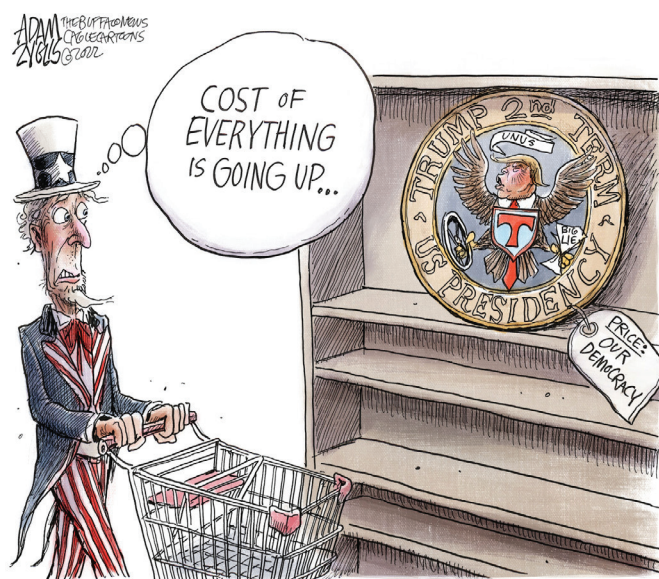
Therein lies the problem. Because results are not measured — either here at home or on the national political stage — by practicable results but instead by which part of the far left or right can gain ascendancy.

Our elected lawmakers on both sides of the political fence need to begin to work together and to develop concrete solutions to difficult problems. Calling Democrats liberals bent on destroying the Republic and Republicans as people who want to create some kind of Handmaid's Tale-like system is not only ludicrous but solves no problems and creates only more problems.

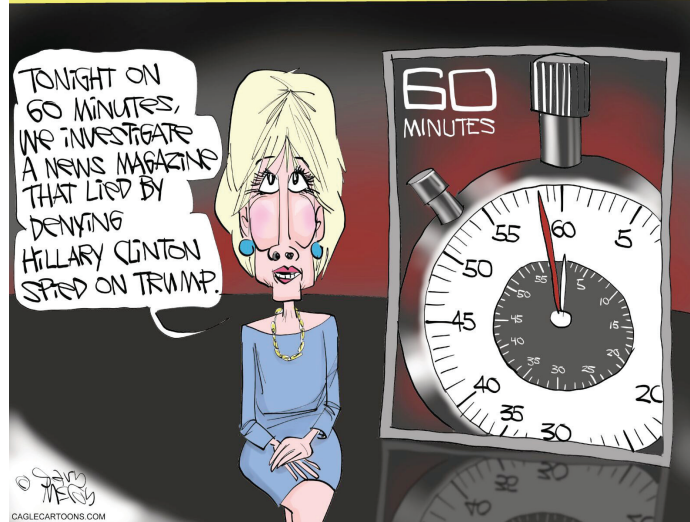
The future of our nation and state rests on our lawmakers ability to work through problems. Not fighting.



"I'M NOT GOING TO SUGARCOAT IT, MR. FINKLY... AT THIS RATE, IN A FEW MORE YEARS, YOU COULD BE PRESIDENT."



Example One: How mainstream media can begin to restore credibility.



YOUR VIEWS

Magazine capacity does not define or is limited to an assault weapon

I disagree with Dr. Andrew Clark's opinion on assault rifles and magazine capacity. The U.S. Army defines this weapon as a short rifle, medium power weapon capable of automatic fire. This means that pulling the trigger once will fire all the ammunition available. A person cannot buy this weapon legally through any source in the U.S. except under very rigid circumstances.

All other rifles require the shooter to pull the trigger every time a shot is fired. This makes a huge difference in the time it takes to fire multiple rounds. Magazines holding more than five rounds became available in the 1894 Winchester. Depending on the caliber, that magazine held seven, eight or nine rounds. Quite a few semi-auto, pump and lever-action rifles made years ago and still today hold more than five rounds.

Magazine capacity does not define or is limited to an assault weapon. Restricting our Second Amendment right to own a firearm by modifying the type, color, shape, caliber, magazine capacity or other criteria is no different than restricting free speech. Laws restricting guns or

accessories doesn't prevent murder or crime because criminals obtain guns in many ways that aren't legal.

Mike Mehren
Hermiston

No land owner will benefit from this boondoggle

Here we go again with the push to build the "for profit" Boardman to Hemingway 500 kilowatt power line. Idaho Power Co. is one of the operators of the B2H and owns 45% of the line, along with PacifiCorp. The companies hope the line can become a "clean-energy superhighway." What the comment should say is the companies hope the line will produce the estimated \$80 million in profit for the stockholders of the two investor owned companies.

"The more we study, the more we are convinced that this is the best option for the Pacific Northwest," Idaho Power spokesperson Sven Berg said. What he should say is that it is the best option for the shareholders and has no benefit to the 700-800 private landowners who will suffer not only from the loss and destruction of their land but the significant loss of value due to the line. No land owner will benefit from this boondoggle.

This land grabbing project began back in around 2007-10. At that time Idaho Power was to present an estimate of cost

to build the line, and it was projected to be around a billion dollars, and, as I understand it, there was to be safeguards that taxpayers and ratepayers would not be picking up any of the costs. At this point it should be noted, with the withdrawing of Bonneville Power, PacifiCorp (Berkshire Hathaway) is asking for a rate increase of more than 6% for construction and updates of their lines. It is time for Idaho Power to submit a new updated projected costs budget.

Idaho Power had planned on buying steel from Russia for the towers and lines themselves. That to date has not been done, nor can it due to current actions of Russia. What is the new costs of construction, or should I say destruction, of the planned line site. If it was estimated around a billion dollars in 2010, what is the overall estimates now? Why did the Oregon Public Utility Commission form a commission to study the fire prevention plan of Idaho Power, which returned a summary that Idaho Powers fire prevention plan was not up to standards, only to override the commission's findings and make an exception for Idaho Power? How many energy projects has the Department of Energy Siting Council ever rejected? Idaho Power is to receive a 10% bonus in construction costs, most of which will go to investors.

John and Cyndi Harvey
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