

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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OUR VIEW

Morrow County needs a help up

The Oregon Health Authority plans to ask the Legislature's Emergency Board next month for \$800,000 to help Morrow County tackle a lingering water crisis.

The money will be used, at least partially, to deliver better water filters and well testing to combat nitrate contamination in Morrow County homes.

We hope the Emergency Board acts promptly to OK the funding.

Initially, Morrow County Commissioner Jim Doherty sought a far larger contribution — around \$4 million — to be funneled into the budgets of either the Oregon Health Authority or the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to address the high nitrate levels in domestic wells.

Doherty sent a letter to Rep. Greg Smith, R-Heppner, to ask for the extra funding for the two state agencies. Smith later reported that Gov. Kate Brown requested the \$800,000 for well monitoring and filters.

We're not sure where or how the governor came up with that number and we certainly don't want to quibble. We would be remiss, though, if we did not point out that more than \$800,000 is going to be needed in the long term to fix a problem that has lingered, unsolved, for a long time.

State leaders and the governor can't skimp on this particular crisis. We understand Morrow County is a long way from Salem, and we understand there isn't an infinite amount of money for the E-Board to disburse.

Still, it is inexcusable that in the 21st century a county in a prosperous state must deal with a water issue that harkens to the worst days of the 19th century mega cities.

We know the lawmakers on the E-Board do not have an easy task. They must weigh — we are sure — a lengthy list of funding priorities. Every one of those funding priorities have support, everyone is seen by those who need it as essential.

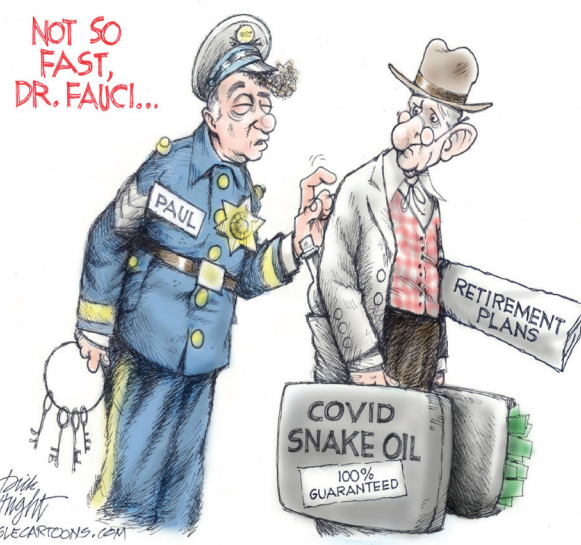
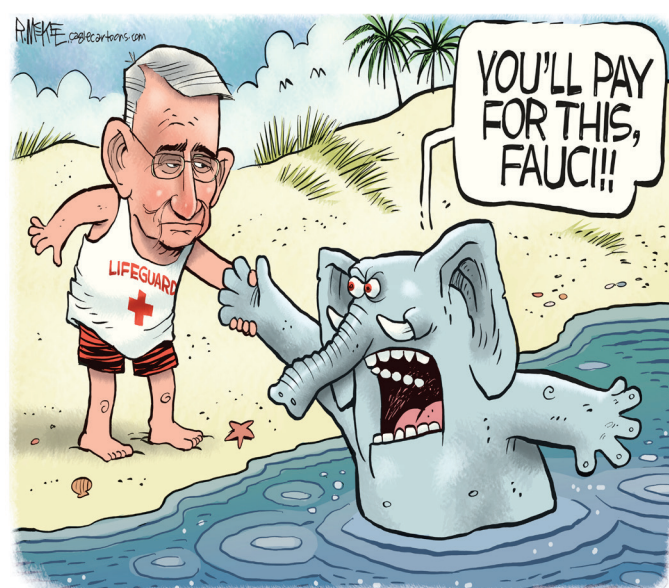
We understand the burden E-Board members must embrace.

Yet we also believe the board can see how important the \$800,000 will be for Morrow County. Will it solve all the problems? No. Will it be a huge help? Yes.

Morrow County needs state help. Not a handout, but a help up. That is a key difference, and we hope lawmakers on the E-Board get educated about the water issue and they see the need to allocate the funds to help alleviate a serious problem.



"I'M SORRY, DEAR, YOU'LL HAVE TO COME BACK LATER. IT'S FOOTBALL SEASON AND THE GAME IS ON."



YOUR VIEWS

City of Pendleton to blame for Uber debacle

Concerning the latest twist in the ride-hailing and Uber debacle created by the city of Pendleton, one can only say, "What the heck?"

You have a city subsidized entity, Elite Taxi, that has taken an independent approach to adding malice to the contentious history of ride-hailing services. Ride-hailing services add substance, convenience and alternatives to Pendleton's transportation needs while the city sits back and does nothing.

The city fiddles while Pendleton burns with yet one more controversy that could have been easily solved in the very beginning.

Carl Culham
Athena

The climate crisis is actually a crime

As someone who follows local and national news reports, I must tell you I am worried about the recent extreme heat and wildfires raging across the

country. I feel for people who lose their lives and livelihoods to extreme weather, and I'm scared that it's only a matter of time until it directly hits me and my community.

Seeing headlines in local news outlets covering these climate disasters made me realize that most news stories show no connection between them and their main cause: fossil fuels. This is dangerous, because many people will continue to refuse to see that longer, hotter and deadlier summers are caused and perpetuated by the disastrous coal, oil and gas projects — and the fossil fuel industry.

The science is clear — the longer we allow coal, oil and gas companies to dig and burn, the worse the impacts of the climate crisis will be. With every fraction of a degree of warming, we'll see and suffer more extreme heat, droughts, floods, wildfires and hurricanes. But the fossil fuel industry continues to ignore these alerts and undermine our chances for a safer future, and CO2 emissions keep rising. We all know this is causing global heating and resulting in extreme weather events, yet they keep digging,

burning and profiting, with zero accountability.

Climate impacts — like the recent heat waves and wildfires — disproportionately affect people and communities who are already marginalized and disadvantaged. People who did the least to cause the climate crisis suffer the worst from its impacts — they lose livelihoods, hope and worse: their lives — while oil companies continue to hit record profits. This is wrong on so many levels.

Local, regional and national media have an important role to play — and a moral obligation to tell the whole truth. It's time to make one thing about extreme weather very clear: It's not a "crisis" that just happens to us — it's a crime, and the fossil fuel industry is to blame. And saying it once isn't enough. Media has an important job to do to turn the tide of public opinion and help the world avoid the worst of the climate impacts.

Please tell the real story about the climate crisis.

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