

VOICE of the CHIEFTAIN

Voters need to remain engaged in legislative activity

The Oregon Legislature is poised to approve yet another gun mandate, and while the battle lines over such issues are clearly drawn, the real lesson for voters is they must remain involved and watchful the actions of their elected lawmaker.

Late last month, the Oregon Senate voted to approve a bill to eliminate guns carried by concealed handgun licensees from state buildings.

The new bill — House Bill 2510 — will require the storage of firearms with trigger or cable locks inside a locked container or gun room.

Input on the bill is, as expected, evenly divided. That may be the only positive element to this piece of legislation — there is no ambiguity about how people feel about it.

It is difficult to see how such a bill — which essentially reaches into a resident's private home — will withstand a court challenge on at least two specific constitutional pillars, but chances are it will gain approval.

Anti-gun bills and other pieces of legislation that tackle cultural flashpoint issues are going to be the norm going into the future, and that means all voters must do all they can to stay apprised of the ambitions and workings of their elected leaders.

In this day and age, that is no easy task. Especially with the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the past, there was a robust system — including the media and other watchdog groups — that keep citizens informed about legislative action. The media landscape, though, has changed. The number of reporters who cover the Oregon Capitol isn't as large as it once was and that can be traced to economics. That means it is up to every voter to ensure they are following what is going on at the Legislature.

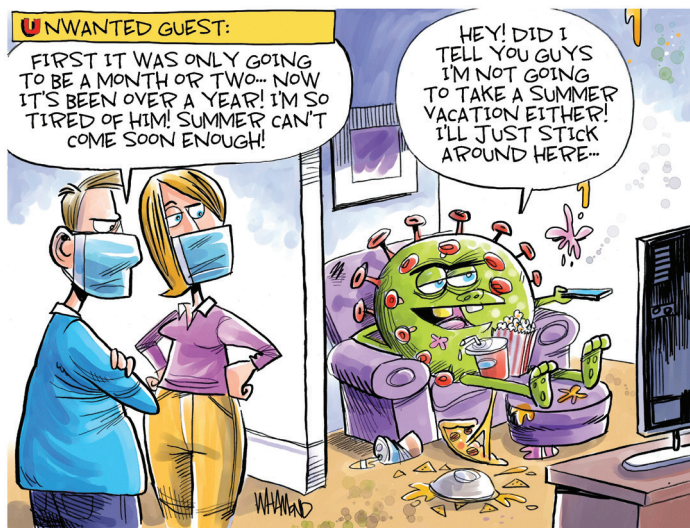
Thankfully, there are paths to keep up to tabs on our lawmakers. The internet is probably the easiest way to do so, and the Oregon Legislature's website is very informative and offers a list of bills that can be easily accessed.

The world is a bigger place now. Stories and events are occurring all the time and often take center stage over what can be viewed as boring news out of a legislative session.

But it isn't boring. At least not when it comes to certain pieces of legislation that can impact us all. That is why it is so important that voters stay informed and remain focused on what is going on at the Legislature.

Every voter has an obligation to stay and be informed.

BillDay FloridaPolitics.com



LETTER to the EDITOR

We are free to disagree

I'm grateful for Mr. Polk's and Mr. McFall's response to my letter addressing concerns with the ethics surrounding the COVID vaccines. It wasn't my intent to misconstrue the facts, however; my position on the ethical issues is just that: my opinion. We are free to disagree on the ethics of testing non-FDA approved (different than EUA) pharmaceutical products on children. We are also free to disagree on the utility of such a vaccine for that age group at. Here are the facts not up for debate:

1. FDA approval (Emergency Use Authorization included) does not mean a vaccine or pharmaceutical is safe. Prescriptiondrugs.procon.org indexes 35 FDA-approved drugs pulled from the market after 1970 due to safety concerns. An NPR article published May 2017 reports one-third of drugs approved between 2001 and 2010 had "major safety issues years after the medications were made widely available to patients." If an EUA feels safe to you,

that's your prerogative.

2. According to the federal Center for Disease Control and Prevention, there are currently no licensed mRNA vaccines in the United States. This technology, while not new in concept, is new to the marketplace, and the long-term effects of the COVID vaccines have not been able to be observed yet. If injecting small children and young adults (who have a minuscule risk of death from COVID exposure) with an understudied substance seems safe to you, that's your prerogative.

3. These under-researched vaccines are being injected into children as young as 6 months without any real (as opposed to theoretical) understanding of the potential long-term effects. On March 16, Moderna announced that "the first participants have been dosed in the Phase 2/3 study, called the KidCOVE study, of mRNA-1273 ... in children ages 6 months to less than 12 years." On March 31, Pfizer-BioNTech announced in a press release: "Last week, Pfizer and BioNTech dosed the first healthy children in a global Phase 1/2/3 seamless study to further evaluate

the safety, tolerability and immunogenicity of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine in children 6 months to 11 years of age." If that seems ethical to you, that's your prerogative.

4. The federally managed VAERS (Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System) contains the reports of more than a thousand deaths and tens of thousands of injuries that have been recorded in association with the COVID vaccine (<https://childrenshealthdefense.org/defender/vaers-covid-vaccine-injury-reports-increase>). Polk and McFall claim "not a single death has been reported (from the vaccine)." I know people who have personally been adversely affected, and I know many medical professionals, including physicians, who refuse to receive the vaccine for ethical and safety concerns.

It's through this kind of open dialogue that we can discern the truth, and I appreciate the well-articulated response. Perhaps the readers will find it compelling.

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