

## OPINION

### OTHER VIEWS

# Oregon's single-payer plan won't cover this type of care

When you hear that Oregon might move to a single-payer, state-run health plan, you may think: Yes!

Every Oregonian would get health care coverage and the same level of coverage. Equity and quality might go up. Overall costs may be held down. You would pay taxes instead of health care premiums.

That's the kind of plan the state's Joint Task Force on Universal Health Care is supposed to develop. It met again Thursday, taking another step toward its goal of submitting a Health Care for All Oregon Plan to the Legislature by September 2022.

Is Oregon going to make such a momentous shift in health care? Should skeptical Oregonians, health insurers, pharmaceutical companies and others be nervous?

We can't answer that. We are just going to slice off one piece of this issue. That's a form of care that the plan won't cover: long-term services and supports.

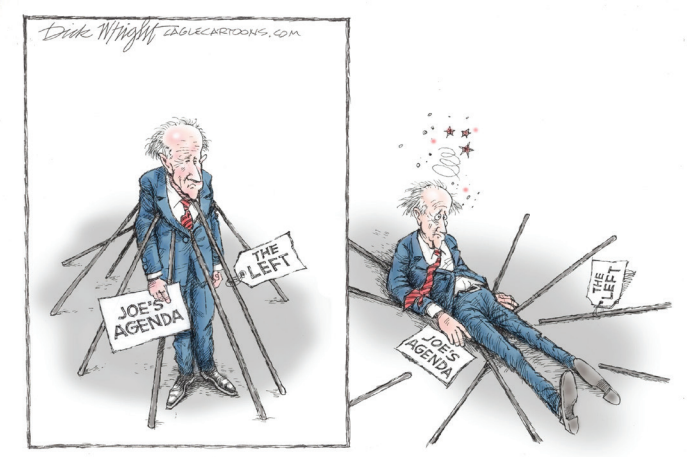
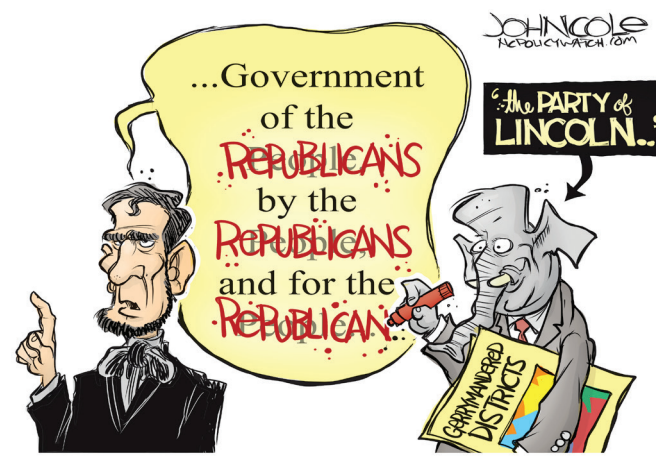
Long-term services and supports is medical and nonmedical care provided to people who are not able to do things for themselves, such as cook, dress, bathe or make it to the bathroom. The harsh reality is that while people can need that at any stage of life, Medicare and most health insurance do not pay for it. People need to "spend down" their assets to where they have very little left and keep their assets low to be eligible for government assistance. Buying additional insurance can help.

That harsh reality would continue under an Oregon single-payer plan, at least as the task force discussed on Thursday. They even deleted on Thursday language from their proposed recommendation to the Legislature that highlighted the issue. Struck from the recommendation was this sentence: "Oregonians who are not eligible for LTSS benefits will continue to 'spend down' assets before becoming eligible." Task force members weren't trying to hide what they were doing. It is just not something Oregon's single-payer plan would do. It's a state of affairs in health care that isn't going to change.

No state that has been developing a single-payer plan has found a simple way to cover long-term services. They have all struggled with it, as Oregon's task force is. If the government started paying for that type of long-term care, it would increase health care costs substantially for any new health system because substantial parts of it aren't covered now.

It might be that an Oregon single-payer plan would cover long-term services and supports at some point in the future. For now it's important to note that a type of care that many Oregonians may need at some point in their lives would not be covered by the Health Care for All Oregon Plan.

— Bend Bulletin



### LETTERS to the EDITOR

#### Ranchers deserve praise for stepping up

Reply to Ranchers concerned over Dean Ranch cattle:  
Our community has come together with compassion and determination to rescue stranded and starving cattle in Upper Imnaha. So many people volunteered and donated their time and money, taking time away from their own jobs and herds. Donations of money, hay, searching on snowmobiles, by air, on sleds and building sleds to bring the cattle and calves to safety, bottle feeding the calves to save their lives in dreadful weather conditions to rescue these animals.  
Wallowa County ranchers have a stellar reputation as cattlemen as do the residents who came together to assist in this sad situation. I am so proud to live in this community.  
These heroes need to be acknowledged, having done this without expecting anything in return.  
I, along with countless others wish to thank you for your hard work and sense of community.  
Thank you Mark and Anna Butterfield, Cory and Deena Miller, Greg and Trent Bales, Cody Ross, Justin Exon, Eric Butterfield, Dave Staigle, Rawley Bigsby, Jay

Myra, Dean Ranch hands, Stangle Industries, Wallowa County Sheriff's Department, Wallowa County Road Department, Tom and Kelly Birkmaier, Adam Stein, Todd Nash and all local ranchers and residents. We pray this never happens again.  
This is what defines our community, this is what we are made of. Way to go Wallowa County!

Karen Frioli  
Enterprise

#### What happened to cattle was unethical

As a retired cattle rancher from the Snake River country, I know how important it is to get cattle out of the high country by snow time.  
What happened to the Dean Ranch cattle was unethical, in my opinion.  
Three important things in ranching are: 1) Good care of your livestock, 2) Good care of your land, because without good grasslands you cannot have good livestock and 3) Good ethical animal husbandry.  
What's the meaning of ethical? It is honesty, integrity, impartiality, fairness, loyalty, dedication, responsibility and accountability. It is also the practice of protecting livestock welfare.

In ranching, livestock is your bread and butter. They are your main income, so you have to do all you can to keep them alive and healthy as possible. To have a successful operation, you have to have respect for livestock.

Every season, every month and every day has its own set of tasks when ranching.  
While you may get away with putting off undesirable tasks in the world outside of ranching, it doesn't work like that when you're a rancher.  
Failure to be ethical and to plan ahead is a recipe for disaster.

Casey Tippet  
Joseph

#### Quit milking dead cows for inflammatory opinions

How long are you going to milk those dead cows for inflammatory and sensational opinions that may not be fact? You are doing injury to the entire cattle business. Also, can't you publish photos of people that do not make them look like Bill the Cat? A little professionalism is long overdue.

Patty Engelking  
Wallowa

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