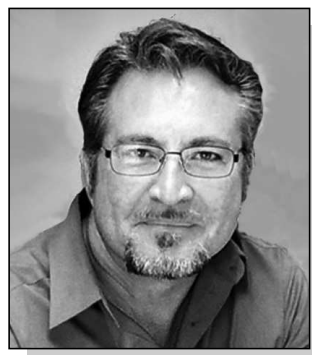


Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
Florence, OR 97439

Opinion

The First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.



From dune to shining sea, Oregon beaches are yours

don't live in Oregon received the same "inheritance" when it comes to the Oregon coast, which remains public domain "from the first dune to the sea" along the entire 363-mile or so expanse thanks to the Oregon "Beach Bill."

The bill, officially signed by McCall as HB 1600 and 1601 in 1967, celebrates its 50th anniversary tomorrow. And while I may not be an actual oceanfront land baron, the fact that I or anyone can walk onto any beach along the Oregon coast, at any time, without seeking permission or being obstructed by no "trespassing" signs, is almost as good.

As I've mentioned before (usually in a quiet whisper), I spent my early years growing up in California before moving here as a teenager in 1980. As a kid, I was keenly aware that certain areas of beach were restricted because they were privately owned. Fences, property markers and signs warning of potential prosecution for violators served as reminders that a line of privilege could be drawn in the sand.

During one sunny afternoon as an 8-year-old on Manhattan Beach, my carefree play in the surf unknowingly carried me

When our family arrived in Oregon several years later and discovered there were no privately owned beaches anywhere along the coast, I knew it was something special.

Though McCall is credited with signing the official legis-

challenged by William Hay, owner of the Surfsand Motel in Cannon Beach, Ore., who placed large driftwood logs to block off a section of the dry sand in front of his property. In addition, he set up tables with umbrellas and marked the area with private property signs.

That's when it was discovered that the highway designation established by West wasn't specific enough and could be interpreted as only including the "wet-sand" portion of the state's beaches as a public highway. At the time, according to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, that meant that 112 of the 362 miles of beach property could be considered privately owned.

In response, The State Highway Commission, along with McCall and the Oregon legislature, introduced HB 1600 and HB 1601, which Associated Press reporter Matt Kramer thrust into the public commentary with stories

about Oregon's "Beach Bill." Kramer's articles appeared in newspapers throughout Oregon, prompting beachgoers around the state to get involved, raising awareness and turning up the political heat in the legislature — where Republican and Democratic leaders joined McCall in negotiating the bill.

As a result, McCall signed the Beach Bill on June 6, 1967 — assuring that no lines would ever be drawn again in the sand along Oregon's beaches.

I hope you'll take time to enjoy them during the months and years ahead.

Because thanks to West, McCall and the Oregonians who came before us, it's more than an opportunity to enjoy our coast's natural beauty; it's your right.

Write Siuslaw News editor Ned Hickson at nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com or P.O. Box 10, Florence, Ore. 97439.

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From the Editor's Desk

NED HICKSON

over one of those lines and deposited me on someone's private beach. From the deck of their three-story beach home I could hear someone yelling obscenities at me, ordering me to "get my _ss off their beach before I got shot."

Though I shrugged it off with the help of friends, the notion that someone would threaten to shoot me for drifting across an arbitrary line on a shore fed by the same surf shared by everyone seemed wrong even to an 8-year-old.

lation in 1967, the notion of keeping our beaches free from privatization began as far back as 1913, when then-governor Oswald West and the Oregon legislature established the state's ocean beaches as a public highway. The crafty move kept developers at bay for more than 50 years as Oregonians took ownership of — and no small amount of pride in — enjoying their beautiful coastline.

It wasn't until 1966 that the highway designation was

LETTERS

MAKE YOUR VOICES HEARD

I am writing in response to Martin Cable's letter "Toxic Rhetoric Leads to Real Violence" (June 28.)

While I do not always agree with Mr. Hickson, I find him fair and balanced. I am quite conservative and have had no trouble getting letters published.

Friends offer congratulations, yet never write.

Rather than attack Mr. Hickson for the letters published, write to counter erroneous letters and convince your conservative friends to make their voices heard.

Get involved.

Learn the facts.

Take the editor to task on specifics.

For example, in the article "Carjacking Shatters Quiet Afternoon on North Fork (June

28), the description "a weapon similar to an M-16 assault rifle" was used.

Similar how?

The writer is very likely unable to pick an M-16 from an AR-15, FN-15, MR556A1, AP4, HBAR, AR-10, 15L — any of dozens of other semi-autos and probably not even a single shot .22 with a pistol grip.

It is shoddy journalism to slant an article with biased terms.

Editor, please endeavor to emulate the late Abe Rosenthal of the NYT. His epitaph is: "He kept the paper straight" and he was uncompromising in defense of high standards and called for fairness, objectivity and good taste free of editorial comment, causes, political agendas, innuendo and unattributed pejorative quotations.

— Ian Eales
Florence

LATEST REPEAL OF ACA BREAKS PRESIDENT'S PROMISE

Prior to Affordable Care Act, the Medicare Trust Fund was expected to run short of money by 2016. However, due to the ACA's 0.9 percent tax on individuals earning more than \$200,000 (or more than \$250,000 for those filing jointly), and its reduced payments to hospitals and private insurers under Medicare Advantage, solvency of the Trust Fund, which is used to reimburse hospitals for treatment provided to seniors, was projected to remain solvent until 2028.

Repealing ACA opens the door to a \$117 billion loss in revenue over the next 10 years and accelerates by at least four years, to 2024, when the Trust Fund would not be able to pay out full benefits.

The latest proposed replacement of the ACA, the American Health Care Act, has no replacement funding provision.

This threat to medicare solvency and the benefits to the 55 million Medicare enrollees has been lost in the more immediate concern

about adverse affects of spending cuts to Medicaid. But, as pointed out by Sen. Wyden, the latest repeal "breaks a clear Trump promise not to harm Medicare..." In addition to AHCA's many other harmful provisions, it gives a tax break to the wealthy and steals directly from Medicare's coffers."

Coupled with the demographic reality of millions of Americans age 55-64 approaching Medicare eligibility, a weakened Medicare Trust arguably will be financially unsustainable. It's an argument that smooths the way for Medicare privatization either through expansion of private-insurer-run Medicare Advantage or a voucher-type program — alternative that have long been the goal of small-government "entitlement hawks."

One possible alternative is increasing the efficiency of health care delivery.

Unfortunately, repeal of ACA cuts off its funding for research and development of cost-saving best practices and administrative procedures, an important ACA focus.

Repair and retain ACA? Raise taxes? Reduce the role of Medicare in providing health care for the elderly and the poor?

As Andrew Slavitt, the former administrator of CMS warns, "This is a big issue for Medicare beneficiaries and particularly anyone who is not a Medicare beneficiary today but plans to be one sometime in the future."

— Arnold Buchman
Florence

HEALTHCARE BILL IS A TAX CUT FOR WEALTHY

The United States Senate has taken a recess for a week. When it returns, members will again take up the Senate version of health care, the Better Care Reconciliation Act, or BCRA.

I am one of the 22 million (roughly the population of Florida) who will lose Medicaid if the bill passes in its current form.

This bill has only between 12 to 27 percent approval rating from voters.

Make no mistake, this is not a "healthcare" bill; it is a "tax cut" bill.

The Tax Policy Center estimates that those who benefit the most from this tax cut are the wealthiest Americans (44.6 percent tax break to the top 1 percent). Low and middle income Americans will see a much smaller tax cut (7.2 to 8.8 percent).

With the loss of Medicaid, there will be an estimated 26,500 excess deaths over the next 10 years associated with BCRA. Many people will lose their doctors' visits and prescription drug coverage, and will be unable to afford nursing homes and assisted living facilities without Medicaid.

Medicare only covers 100 days in a nursing home. Rural hospitals, like Peace Harbor, will lose funding, which could have a devastating impact on services.

In short, people will die due to this bill.

Though I did not vote for President Trump, he is the president and represents all Americans — not just those who voted for him.

The BCRA hurts many on Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security regardless of who we voted for.

President Trump promised he would not touch Medicaid, Medicare or Social Security. He promised "something better" than the Affordable Care Act.

BCRA is not better; it is far, far worse.

The President needs to stand up for the "forgotten" Americans he promised to represent. He told us what a great negotiator he would be, but refuses to reach out to Democrats or unify rather than divide.

It's time for the president to govern and fulfill the promises he made.

— Marybeth Marenco
Florence

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Libelous, argumentative and anonymous letters or poetry, or letters from outside our readership area will not be published.

Send letters to:
nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com

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James Rand
Jenna Bartlett
Ned Hickson
Erik Chalhoub

Oregon Group Publisher (541) 265 8571
Publisher, ext. 318
Editor, ext. 313
Consulting Editor (831) 761-7353
Email: echalhoub@register-pajaronian.com
Marketing Director, ext. 326
Office Supervisor, ext. 312
Production Supervisor
Press Manager

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Wednesday Issue—General news, Monday noon; Budgets, four days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Monday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Monday noon; Boxed and display classified ads, Friday 5 p.m.
Saturday Issue—General news, Thursday noon; Budgets, two days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Thursday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Thursday noon; Boxed and display classified ads, Wednesday 5 p.m. Soundings, Tuesday 5 p.m.

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WHERE TO WRITE

Pres. Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
Comments: 202-456-1111
Switchboard: 202-456-1414
FAX: 202-456-2461
TTY/TDD Comments:
202-456-6213
www.whitehouse.gov

Gov. Kate Brown
160 State Capitol
900 Court St.
Salem, OR 97301-4047
Governor's Citizens' Rep.
Message Line 503-378-4582
www.oregon.gov/ov

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden
221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510

202-224-5244
541-431-0229
www.wyden.senate.gov

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley
313 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-3753/FAX: 202-228-3997
541-465-6750
www.merkley.senate.gov

U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio (4th Dist.)
2134 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-6416
541-269-2609/ 541-465-6732
www.defazio.house.gov

State Sen. Arnie Roblan (Dist. 5)
900 Court St. NE - S-417
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1705

FAX: 503-986-1080
Email:
Sen.ArnieRoblan@state.or.us

State Rep. Caddy McKeown
(Dist. 9)
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1409
Email:
rep.caddymckeown@state.or.us

West Lane County Commissioner
Jay Bozievich
125 E. Eighth St.
Eugene, OR 97401
541-682-4203
FAX: 541-682-4616
Email:
Jay.Bozievich@co.lane.or.us