

**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.

USPS# 497-660 Copyright 2017 © Siuslaw News

## Siuslaw News

Published every Wednesday and Saturday at 148 Maple St. in Florence, Lane County, Oregon. A member of the National Newspaper Association and Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association. Periodicals postage paid at Florence, Ore. Postmaster, send address changes to: Siuslaw News, P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439; phone 541-997-3441; fax 541-997-7979. All press releases may be sent to PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com.

James Rand  
Jenna Bartlett  
Ned Hickson  
Erik Chalhou

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

Susan Gutierrez  
Cathy Dietz  
Ron Annis  
Jeremy Gentry

### DEADLINES:

**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.

### NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

In Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$71; 10-weeks subscription, \$18; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$94; 10-weeks subscription, \$24; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$120; Out of United States — 1-year subscription, \$200; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$65.

Mail subscription includes E-Edition.  
Website and E-Edition: [www.TheSiuslawNews.com](http://www.TheSiuslawNews.com)



## LETTERS

### CONTROL HEALTHCARE COST, NOT COVERAGE

Rhetoric continues to fly in the debate over healthcare costs and coverages. Sadly, it is political ideology driving that debate rather than honest consideration of the problem, thus leading to a reasonable solution.

Toward the latter methodology, consider some facts.

First, the price of health insurance is not the same as the cost of healthcare. The cost of insurance merely follows the cost of the service it covers.

Figures from the Kaiser Family Foundation indicate that over the past 10 years, overall cost of health insurance premiums has risen some 86 percent.

PwC (previously Pricewaterhouse Coopers) charts the increase in healthcare services over the same period to be 84.5 percent. Now consider that over the past 10 years the Federal Government sets the increase in the Consumer Price Index at 20 percent.

Based on these numbers, I have to conclude that unless we find a way to control the outrageous increases in the cost of the underlying service, there is nothing that can be done to reduce the cost of insuring for that service. We can pay one way or we can pay the other but, rest assured, we are going to pay.

We can, under the Affordable Care Act, pay for our care through private insurance companies, supporting their double-digit overhead costs, while also paying the increased taxes necessary to subsidize those same insurance companies in order to allow them to insure a great many people at a cost less than that of the services rendered; Or, we could revert to the previous model, where the costs for care and coverage are carefully coordinated between the insurers and providers, resulting in the steady and heavy increases in those costs that long predate passage of the ACA.

Or, we could adopt a single-payer system (sound of minds slamming shut) where one buyer can directly control costs — as with Medicare.

While I have grave reservations about the steadily increasing expansion of government control into all aspects of our lives, here is one area where something has to be done to establish control — and the reality is only the federal government has the power to pull it off.

But fear not, my conservative friends. There is absolutely no danger of this coming to pass. For it would depend on a congress, president and a large portion of the American electorate being willing to pull their heads out of...

Well, enough said.

— Jimmie Zinn  
Florence

### ADJUST WE MUST TO SAVE OUR PLANET

Most climate scientists believe the temperature of our earth and oceans are rising. Warming oceans can cause more severe storms, such as the recent record-breaking number of devastating hurricanes.

Climate change contributes to the continued drought in Africa; a five-year prolonged drought in California; the disappearance of islands in equatorial regions due to rising oceans; and the suffering of Alaskan native people due to melting ice and beach erosion.

Climate change also produces more worldwide conflict as people struggle to survive.

The Earth is finite.

We cannot continue to exploit it to no end. We must embrace alternative energy and reduce our reliance on fossil fuels.

For instance, the Tesla Company has proposed it could outfit the entire island of Puerto Rico with solar panels to make that island totally self-reliant energy-wise.

Whether you believe climate change is man-made or not, the fact is that the Earth is warming.

As the intelligent species and advanced country we think we are, we have a responsibility to protect biodiversity and create a more sustainable future for our children and grandchildren.

Adjust we must.

— Julie MacFarlane  
Florence

### WON'T FUND POOR OCHS BOARD DECISIONS

In 2006, my wife and I picked up a new puppy from the Florence Humane Society Shelter (now Oregon Coast Humane Society). We had been looking at several shelters and were most impressed with the cleanliness and care at the Florence shelter.

When our beloved dog died last December, we donated dog food and money. Perhaps more importantly, we memorialized him by putting a very large bequest to the OCHS in our will.

Now, we are disgusted and saddened with actions by its current Board of Directors and its treatment of valued volunteers.

Today, my wife and I just returned from our attorney's office, where we had the bequest removed from our will.

We are sorry it came to this, but until there is a change, we at least know it cannot make poor decisions backed by our funds.

— Mark Wolfe  
Florence (and Corvallis)

### TAX REFORM PROPOSAL GREAT NEWS FOR WEALTHY

The Trump administration's tax reform proposal is designed to keep the middle and lower class under severe austerity while enriching the wealthiest one percent. The plan is a tax cut for the wealthy by an average of \$40,000 a year. It proposes cutting corporate taxes almost in half (from 39.6 percent to 20 percent) and cutting overseas taxes on profits to zero. Many big corporations, using all the loopholes available to them, already pay little to no taxes. The president's claim that America has the highest tax rate of any developed countries is simply not true.

The plan would eliminate the estate tax (also called the death tax), a huge benefit to millionaires' heirs.

This would benefit Trump's heirs (his already wealthy children), the Walton family (Walmart) heirs, most of the Cabinet Secretaries' heirs and other millionaire and billionaire heirs. The average middle class family will gain nothing while the wealthiest one percent continue to hoard money.

The plan also proposes an increase in the standard deduction. However, by taking this new, higher deduction, you will no longer be able to itemize your other deductions.

In most cases, by using the higher standard deduction, a middle class family will see a tax increase. This proposal will actually raise the tax rate on those making \$9,000 a year or less, with their rate going from 10 to 12 percent.

The House of Representatives and the Senate just passed a budget Thursday which includes \$473 billion in cuts from Medicare over 10 years, and more than \$1 trillion from Medicaid.

It also reduces Social Security over the next 10 years. The president has praised the plan, even after he promised voters he would not touch Medicare.

And now, not even a full year into office, he and the Republican-controlled Congress are getting ready to do just that.

The president seems to have already forgotten the "forgotten men and women" of America who voted for him. Sadly, this tax reform proposal and this budget will actually hurt the very people who voted for him.

— Marybeth Marengo  
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 only be published at the discretion of the editor.

### POLITICAL/ELECTION LETTERS:

Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.

Letters must 1) Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates; 2) Ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay; and 3) explain the reasons to support candidates based on personal experience and perspective rather than partisanship and campaign-style rhetoric.

Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this constitutes paid political advertising.

As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher, general manager and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn't follow the above criteria.

Send letters to:  
[nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com](mailto:nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com)

## 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](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

**Gov. Kate Brown**  
160 State Capitol  
900 Court St.  
Salem, Ore. 97301-4047  
Governor's Citizens' Rep.  
Message Line:  
503-378-4582  
[www.oregon.gov](http://www.oregon.gov)

**U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden**  
221 Dirksen Senate Office  
Bldg  
Washington, DC 20510  
202-224-5244  
541-431-0229  
[www.wyden.senate.gov](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:Jay.Bozievich@co.lane.or.us)