

Opinion

LETTERS

More letters from 4A

THERE HAS TO BE

A BETTER WAY

Today, I again forced myself to take back the used cans and bottles held hostage by the required deposit. On arrival at the "redemption" area, I discovered three of the four machines were non-functional and watched the fourth break during use.

I went to get help and eventually someone with a key to the devices came and did his magic.

I then proceeded to place, one at a time, the sticky little objects into the maw of a device that looked as though it could take your arm off, if you were indiscreet. Some of the cans, even though purchased at the same store, were rejected by being forced back out the input hole, causing a traffic jam.

I had no choice but to drop them on the ground for later retrieval and disposal.

Meanwhile, I had the pleasure of breathing someone's cigarette smoke as the wind whistled through the outdoor tunnel where the machines were located. I then went into the store to wash my hands, not wanting to get stuck to my car.

I was in no mood to shop. I'm all for recycling. However, it continues to get more difficult. What happened to the machines with bins where you could dump cans and have them counted? What will we do with plastics now that they're no longer acceptable? Why do I have to go elsewhere to recycle Styrofoam? Glass?

As the system makes it more and more distasteful, difficult and time consuming to recycle, people will stop. I'm close to not recycling and not buying things with deposits.

There has to be a better way.

—Rick Marsh
Florence

RENEW LOCAL OPTION LEVY, IMPROVE PROPERTY VALUE

The Nov. 7 local option levy renewal simply saves what we've gained from approving the original levy for our school system: Decent staffing, reduced class size, more programs and opportunities for our students to enter the world on an equal playing field.

We all love living on the coast — especially retirees. That luxury limits income sources to support education.

Fixed incomes fix our minds on immediate interests which often do not include our youth — medical services and leisure time activities fill our days.

Sometimes our youth scare and annoy us; we just don't know what to do with their energy and noise. Even the library segregates the teens and the toddlers from the main population.

So why should we care to continue spending the same amount of money we currently spend on our property taxes to support schools?

Consider caring enough to keep our schools at their current level of operation ... enough to convince young professionals to stay in Florence and raise their families while providing us with the many services we require as we age ... enough to build a diverse and thriving culture which fosters creative and capable future citizens.

At the very least, it will improve our property values.

—Bou Kilgore
Florence

YES, WE DO NEED TAX REFORM

President Trump and friends are pushing tax reform legislation with bouquets of promises for

Average Joe.

However, those even half awake can see the breaks are going to the top tax bracket — with a few crumbs to the rest.

Ronald Reagan campaigned with similar promises and massively reduced taxes in 1981, with the wealthiest receiving the largest slice of pie. Meanwhile, the Treasury came up short and taxes went up in 1982, 1983, 1984 and 1987 — but only on the back of Average Joe.

So truth be told, the massive disparity in wealth distribution we are experiencing now began in the 1980s.

Now, the premise that corporations need this current tax break to boost the economy is being swallowed by the gullible.

Let's be honest: Corporate heads who already receive multi-millions in compensation and bonuses fight minimum wage increases, health benefits and overtime pay for their employees. Can we expect them to suddenly change and share their tax break with Average Joe?

They promise jobs; tax cuts do not equal job growth. Prior to Reagan, Jimmy Carter had yearly job growth of 2.6 M; Reagan, after tax breaks to the wealthy, had 2M a year; and Clinton, after raising the tax rate for the wealthiest, had job growth of 2.6 M a year.

We do need massive tax reform. The top one percent of households hold about the same wealth as the bottom 90 percent. Corporate taxes paid after loopholes is a fraction of the rate and, recently, 22 percent of large corporations paid zero corporate taxes.

Without fair taxes, our schools suffer and college students able to get a loan are buried in debt.

Our transportation and infrastructure need a transfusion.

Our health care is a disaster.

Economic competition is

stymied by corporate takeovers that control sectors of the economy.

Fair taxes can reduce the bloated profits for the few, into jobs in healthcare, infrastructure, technology and education.

Give small business a chance to compete. Jobs equal paychecks — and paychecks equal spending.

The jobs are there if education provides the skill sets, and if fair taxes provide the means.

—Karen Mahoney
Florence

OLDER THAN 60, STILL SUPPORTS SCHOOLS

I, like many other seniors, have moved to Florence from out of the area. My own children are grown and live elsewhere.

However, I still see the importance of supporting our local school district. In fact, I recently joined the Florence Community PTA because I want to be part of making positive changes in our schools.

The PTA is endorsing the Siuslaw School District Local Option Renewal, Measure 20-281.

A renewal means tax rates will remain the same. We want to make sure that the positive changes brought about by the current levy, such as increased graduation rates, remain in place.

The renewed option levy would add funds to fully implement Measure 98, which expands career and technology education.

Why do I think supporting schools is important? I know that educating children helps us all. They will be able to work at jobs that can support themselves and their families. This in turn will build our local economy.

Many of them will also go into medical fields that will support our aged population.

A vibrant school system improves our community and attracts new businesses, as well as professionals. The

new doctors we so badly need here most certainly want good educational opportunities for their children.

Supporting our schools by approving renewal of the option levy (Measure of 20-281) will benefit all of us.

—Leonora Kent
Florence

GUN REGULATION DOES NOT REDUCE HOMICIDES

In response to Michael Allen's letter "Regulations Can Reduce Gun Violence" (Oct. 25): For ages 14 to -24 there was a gun homicide rapid ramp-up beginning in the mid 1980s. These homicides were overwhelmingly by handguns and males.

We all remember the television show "Miami Vice" and its depiction of drug gang violence.

If one removes the 14 to 24 demographic, waiting periods have zero effect. For ages under 14 and over 25, gun homicides have been decreasing at a constant rate for almost the entire study period, save for a slight spike at the end of the Carter presidency.

Regulations are applied to everyone and ignored by criminals. To my knowledge, no legitimate study has ever shown that increased regulation has led to a reduction in firearm homicides.

Mr. Allen might find Joyce Lee Malcolm's "Guns and Violence: The English Experience" instructive. This excellent study tracks firearms and their regulation in England for hundreds of years. And for all but the last hundred years, English society became increasingly less violent; firearm violence increased lock-step with firearm regulation.

One would do well to recall Englishman Disraeli's maxim:

"There are lies, damned lies and statistics."

—Ian Eales
Florence

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www.churchofchristflorence.org

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www.lutheranchurchflorence.com

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