

**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.



## LETTERS

### TIME FOR ACTION, NOT MORE WORDS

Another school shooting, and President Trump, along with most of Congress, seems beholden to the NRA (which contributed \$30 million to Trump's campaign and untold millions to members of Congress) and don't want to talk about the gun problem.

The president wants to discuss the mental illness problem. Fair enough.

But his most recent budget calls for a 30 percent reduction in money for mental illness services; pay attention to his actions, not his words.

The president is also calling for teachers to be armed. I can't imagine a worse scenario than a teacher with a concealed handgun facing off against a shooter with an automatic or semi-automatic weapon.

Surely the teacher is at a disadvantage, along with the children caught in the crossfire. Yet, Trump's budget cuts 5.3 percent from the education budget.

In addition, thanks to the tax plan passed by a Republican majority vote and signed into law by President Trump, teachers will no longer be able to deduct the amount they pay out of their own pockets for school supplies from their taxes.

Again, pay attention to the president's actions, not his words.

Automatic weapons and semi-automatic weapons were developed for the military for use in war. They are designed to spray bullets and kill people — as many as possible in a short amount of time. There is no need for these weapons of war to be available to civilians.

Period.

I know there are lots of these weapons of war already owned by people. So, to stop their use, stop selling the large capacity magazines, which would render them useless.

It seems that the NRA does not represent 2nd Amendment rights for anyone; it represents the gun manufacturers who are making millions of dollars selling people guns by continually stoking fear. The fear is the constant drumbeat of their conspiracy theory that any regulation is a slippery slope to a gun grab by the government.

The 2nd Amendment guarantees the right to bear arms. In an interview with Fox News on July 29, 2012, Justice Antonin Scalia opined about the 2nd Amendment, "There are some limitations that can be imposed."

We need to listen to the brave survivors of Parkland, Fla., and other school shootings. They have looked down the barrel of a weapon of war. They have seen the carnage left in the wake of war.

They are demanding action, not more words.

—Marybeth Marengo  
 Florence

### NOT HARD TO IMAGINE DEFENDING CHILDREN

A quote on the the front page of the

Register-Guard (Sept. 24) about a kindergarten teacher with a loaded gun in class partially read, "... Can you imagine?"

In the case of a teacher or staff member who is willing to carry a concealed weapon, yes I can imagine it.

Imagine the scenario where a criminal shooter comes into a school, not deterred by background checks, security measures or locked doors, with police on their way but yet to arrive. Meanwhile, teachers heroically shielded students with their bodies and die in the process.

In that very real and terrifyingly brief moment when the only thing standing between a student and their executioner is a teacher trying to shield them or taking cover behind a desk, why not give them a chance to fight back with a concealed gun if they want it?

They may succeed or they may fail. But when the end result may be dead or wounded students and teachers anyway, why not give them a chance?

Yes, I can imagine that.

—Dave Peck  
 Florence

### REASONABLE GUN LEGISLATION WON'T DENY RIGHTS

Some months ago, we wrote asking our state representative, Caddy McKeown, to support legislation that seeks to limit the abuse of firearms. She wrote back that she would not, because she felt that her rural constituency holds high the right to bear arms, and that such legislation would diminish that right.

Now, we have another slaughter at an American school committed by an individual who obviously should not have had access to weapons.

We note that McKeown is the only Democratic state legislator who voted against the recent legislation to correct a loophole in Oregon's arms management laws. We ask her to reconsider her position on this matter.

We have been rural residents our entire adult lives. We have a rifle and regard it as a tool to be used responsibly within the limits of the law, as does everyone of our rural neighbors as far as we know. In our experience, it was the annual influx of hunters from the cities — often while drinking — who trespassed, shot the horses and cows, broke the fences and threatened our safety as rural residents.

Reasonable gun legislation won't take away our right to bear arms anymore than driving laws take away our right to drive. But reasonable legislation might save a few kids and reduce to some degree the fear that is haunting America's families.

Wouldn't rural folk agree that it is irresponsible to not take every measure possible to ensure the safety of our children?

We are asking Ms. McKeown to step up and do the right thing.

—Jim and Jane Pittenger,  
 grandparents in Florence

### END THE PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS OF GUN VIOLENCE

Has Umpqua Community College been forgotten so soon after yet another mass school shooting?

For those who are already of age, get out and vote. Become an activist for a human right — the right to not be intentionally killed by military-type weapons possessed by civilians.

We applaud the Florence veteran who possessed the patriotism to turn in his weapons of mass destruction. He is again a hero for a dramatic action, one of self-conscious protection for all citizens.

And no gun control law or legislation was needed to do the right thing.

Gun owners, take an inventory of your own stockpile, rid your home, car and body of firearms and take action to end the public health crisis of death by gun violence.

—Michael Fletcher  
 and Mark Owens  
 Florence

### EVERYONE HAS RIGHT TO OPINION ON PORT

I am writing in reference to the articles in the Siuslaw News ("Port of Siuslaw Holds Third Public Meeting," Feb. 10; "Port Discusses Business Oregon IGA, Public Input," Feb. 24) about the Port of Siuslaw's public meeting when a complaint letter was read to the commissioners. The letter writers live on their boat in the harbor and experience issues with the public.

Many of the activities they witness are one-time events. Port staff does its best to address complaints and security issues that arise. It is not uncommon to have public activity on the docks around the clock, even though signage says "closed dusk to dawn."

The Port is addressing security concerns with plans to install electronic gates on the marina gangways that will lock at night. In addition, Florence Police have offered to increase patrols in the area.

The letter writers refer to dock sanitation. It is true that public who use the docks for crabbing occasionally leave something behind. There are times when folks consume beverages and leave bottles or cans behind. Everyone knows what seagulls leave behind.

Port staff perform daily dock walks and put a lot of effort into keeping the marina and transient docks clean and presentable for public enjoyment.

The Port Commissioners have asked for public comment and everyone has a right to their opinion.

The take away from this is to address the issues that are presented and work together for positive results. The Port of Siuslaw plays an important role in this community, is ground central for tourists and residents to enjoy, and is a well-maintained facility that will remain so for years to come.

—Dina McClure  
 Interim Port Manager  
 Port of Siuslaw

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## 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.

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**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, \$76; 6-month in-county, \$52; 10-weeks subscription, \$23; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$99; 6-month out-of-county, \$65; 10-weeks subscription, \$29; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$125; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$71.

Mail subscription includes E-Edition.  
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## 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.

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