

Siuslaw News
 P.O. Box 10
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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.

"I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend." —Thomas Jefferson (1800)



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Siuslaw News

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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.

Letters that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or documented will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside the Siuslaw News 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.

Email letters to:
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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	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
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Unitary Executive Theory and Congressional Subpoenas

(Editor's Note: Viewpoint submissions on this and other topics are always welcome as part of our goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives.)

President Trump's refusal to cooperate with Congressional oversight investigations brings the theory of "Unitary Executive" into play. The theory contends that the president's control over the executive branch has no limits and attempts to do so are unconstitutional. This authoritarian view of the presidency is based on the words "the" and "a" as used in the Constitution's Article II phrase "The executive power shall be vested in a President".

Emphasizing "the" and "a," proponents of the theory argue that members of the executive branch are solely accountable to the president alone. Therefore, the president may order any executive branch employee to exercise or not exercise any official function as the president personally thinks best.

The more traditional argument holds that because Article I gives Congress the authority to enact laws "necessary and prop-

er" for executing all powers that the Constitution vests in "any department or officer" of "the government of the United States," Congress has a share of the power to direct those "departments

GUEST VIEWPOINT
By Arnold Buchman
Florence resident

and officers" in the executive as well as the legislative branch.

Because Article II doesn't speak directly of a "unitary executive," its use of the term "presidential executive" power can be read to distinguish "The executive power shall be vested in a President" from an "executive council" as was established by several revolutionary-era state constitutions.

This reading is more consistent with the Constitution's idea that those actions that aren't legislative or judicial be carried out by a president co-equal with the two other branches and subject to the scheme of checks and balances preventing one branch from becoming too powerful.

Especially in the context of an overarching concern that an executive might become another King George III.

The Unitary Executive theory, supported by Attorney General William Barr, clashes with Congressional oversight investigations because it is at the root of the president's executive-privilege resistance to congressional subpoena demands.

The presidential order to the entire executive branch to refuse to provide any information to Congress is an expansion of the argument that the constitutional grant of executive power provides exclusive executive power. More traditionally, assertion of this power has been limited to times of credible national crisis and emergency.

Consequently, the assertion of executive privilege over confidential discussions with advisers, present and former, and any information requested by Congress that the president may deem privileged is executive privilege on steroids; a heedless disregard of Congressional oversight authority and executive tradition; one that if left standing along with other practices derided by Mr. Trump will further undermine the Founders' checks and balances game plan.

