

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.

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

USPS# 497-660 Copyright 2020 © 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.

Jenna Bartlett
Ned Hickson
Susan Gutierrez
Cathy Dietz
Ron Annis

Publisher, ext. 318
Editor, ext. 313
Multimedia Sales Director, ext. 326
Office Supervisor, ext. 312
Production Supervisor

DEADLINES:

Wednesday Issue—General news, Monday noon; Budgets, four days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Monday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Monday noon; 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; Display classified ads, Wednesday 5 p.m. Soundings, Tuesday 5 p.m.

NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

In Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$79; 6-month in-county, \$56; 10-week subscription, \$25; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$102; 6-month out-of-county, \$69; 10-week subscription, \$35; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$134; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$65.

Mail subscription includes E-Edition.
Website and E-Edition: TheSiuslawNews.com

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:

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	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
OREGON 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/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@oregonlegislature.gov
U.S. SEN. RON WYDEN 221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg Washington, DC 20510 202-224-5244 541-431-0229 www.wyden.senate.gov	STATE REP. CADDY MCKEOWN (DIST. 9) 900 Court St. NE Salem, OR 97301 503-986-1409 Email: rep.caddymckeown@oregonlegislature.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	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

New state tax for schools will also fund State General Fund

(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.)

In my recent letter to the editor ("Do You Know About The New Oregon Sales Tax?" Jan. 18), I discussed the new Oregon Sales Tax (HB 3427 or Student Success Act) that is taking people by surprise. The editor made a few comments to further clarify what the new tax is for, who pays it, how much it is and the income tax rate cuts included in the bill.

I would like to add some additional information on a few of the items he mentioned.

The tax is known as the Student Success Act (SSA) and is earmarked for education. What may not be clear is that 25 percent of the tax is going to the State General Fund. In addition, there will be more than 80 new full-time employees added to the Department of Revenue and the State's Attorney General's office in order to implement and administer the new tax.

The official reason given for the new tax is to increase funding to schools that was limited by a 1990 ballot measure. In reality, it is back

door funding for the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS).

Per-student spending has steadily increased since 1990. Over the last 30 years, ever-increasing percentages of dollars budgeted for

GUEST VIEWPOINT

By David R. Davis, CPA retired
Florence

schools didn't make it to the classroom but was instead sent to Salem to fund PERS.

Even with these increases, the funding couldn't keep up with the promises made by the State to public employees. As of September 2019, PERS was \$27 billion under water. Oregon is the fourth biggest per capita spending state in the country so it is not a lack of money it's how it is spent.

The new tax is like a pyramid scheme. It is assessed at every level of production or delivery of service but it's not really going to be paid by the assessed businesses — it's going to be paid by us, the consumer.

Here's why. In its first full year the tax is in place, the State expects to collect \$799,000,000 from taxing

Oregon sales transactions. Businesses have no choice but to pass some or all of their additional tax cost on to their customers (That's us, the consumer.)

There is an income tax rate reduction in the new law of .25 percent on each tax bracket so we do get some help. For example: If you pay Oregon tax on \$50,000 of income, the rate reduction would save you \$125.

In 2020, the tax net increase is projected to be \$587,000,000 or \$440 per Oregon household. The Legislative Revenue Office projects the net tax increase will be \$1,153,000,000 by 2023 — or \$864 per household.

The 2019 legislative session enacted the business sales tax, family leave, payroll tax, healthcare tax, reduced the kicker refund and increased alcohol licensing tax for a grand total of \$2,851,000,000 — or \$2,318 per Oregon household.

That's why I asked the question in my earlier letter about "What part of Mars are they from?"

Either they don't care about the effect of these tax increases on regular citizens, or their economic situation so much better than ours that don't see it as a problem.

LETTERS

SHOULDN'T BE HAPPENING IN THIS COUNTRY

I read the story in the *Siuslaw News* about the recent March for Life ("Local Gathering Supports March For Life," Jan. 29).

It leaves me puzzled.

I have a hard time understanding this thinking. Abortion is a last choice when women have no other option. No one knows the situation a woman is facing and perhaps there is no one to help her after the baby is born.

I just can't see how this is the business of anyone else.

Statistics I've read have shown that after *Roe v Wade* was passed, the abortion rate went down as did the death of pregnant women.

So why work to change the law and put women at risk again?

Of even greater concern for me is what our government is doing at our southern border with

thousands of children being held in filthy cages with subhuman care and many of them reportedly being sexually abused.

Meanwhile, a new private industry is making millions of dollars at these children's expense. The most terrible part of this is that it appears it is being done deliberately to keep people from coming to our country for help.

Don't these children count? Or is it merely an extension of an immigration policy targeting people based on the color of their skin, country of origin or whether they are crippled or poor?

Well, I think our statue of liberty is crying, as am I. This should not be happening in this country; those children are damaged forever — and that is not forgivable.

—Nancy Rickard
Florence

EVERYONE'S SMALL PLASTIC RECYCLING EFFORTS ADD UP

On Sunday, Jan. 26, I took my No. 2, 4 and 5 plastics — all cleaned-up and without labels — to the collection site at the Florence United Methodist Church.

It was a busy place but extremely well-organized. At least six stations were set up, so I was in and out in no time.

Although my containers were a small contribution, all of the plastic turned in surely added up.

Thank you to those many volunteers, Master Recyclers, Lane Co. and Vision for helping me do my little bit.

Hopefully, I'll have less plastic at the next collection date on April 18.

—Mary Lehman
Florence

Clean Water Act is law; how agencies administer it is not

(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.)

I feel the Jan. 29 Letter to the Editor "Environmental 'Protection' or 'Predation' Agency" by Cris Reep needs some clarification.

As stated in his letter, the Clean Water Act is law. Congress makes law, but then an agency is designated to administer the law.

The agency creates The Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs) which are a compilation of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive agencies of the federal government.

Each CFR volume is updated once a year and issued quarterly. These regulations are organized by subject area and assigned to one of 50 CFR Titles. Many of the agencies that administer the CFRs are part of the Executive Branch of Government — in other words, the agency heads are appointed by the President.

Therein lies a "political interest" if you will.

CFRs are *not* law. CFRs are updated annually. One must always

give some credence to the "scope" of the agencies and the CFRs (rules) by which they administer the laws.

Most often, agencies will go beyond the scope of their authority

GUEST VIEWPOINT

By Brian Cole
Florence

and the EPA is an agency that gets much scrutiny. Congress passes laws but fails to oversee the administration of the rules adopted by the President's appointed administration head or director.

The EPA Code of Federal Regulation is represented as Title 40. It presents regulations governing care of the environment from the 14 subchapters of Chapter I and from the provisions regarding the Council on Environmental Quality found in Chapter V.

Programs addressing air, water, pesticides, radiation protection and noise abatement are included. Practices for waste and toxic materials disposal and clean-up are also prescribed.

Additions and revisions to this section of the code are posted annually by July. Publication follows

within six months (and they can be revised).

So, the bottom line is this: The Executive Branch of government has jurisdiction over certain agencies, and their department heads are a Presidentially appointed position.

Therein lies the "politics" if you will.

The Clean Water Act (Congress) is Law; the CFRs are *not*. They are simply adopted agency rules.

So Cris Reep asked the question: "Under what Constitutional provision is President Trump granted the power to make changes to, or in this case completely nullify, a law that has been in effect for 72 years?"

Answer: He *can't*.

CFRs are not Law but agency rules — and the President has some executive power over many agencies and their rules, as long as they conform to the *law*.

Of course, we can all appreciate the "laws of the land" and why we have a Supreme Court trying to decide many of them.

And I can not recall when there was a unanimous Supreme Court ruling of our laws.

—Brian Cole
Florence