

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)



LETTERS

NEED A NEW CONGRESS

No matter which political party you are in, it's time to vote for someone else. I don't know who that would be but it is clear the management we currently have doesn't deserve their fat pay checks or their long list of benefits.

Just before Christmas, Congress passed a 5,583 page COVID Relief package coupled with an Omnibus spending authorization. Of course the congressmen and women had less than four hours to read the 5,583 pages of the proposed bills — but what the heck, it's time to go home for Christmas and it's only \$2.3 trillion (\$2,300,000,000,000) of taxpayer money and debt for our children and grandchildren to pay back.

No worries right?

We all know there is a great deal of pain and suffering that has resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic. American citizens face high unemployment, bankruptcies of small businesses forced to close, food insecurity and increased homelessness along with mental stress and loss of education for our kids.

So, let's take a look a quick look at some of what our good congress men and women are spending our money on: \$15 million to Pakistan for democracy programs, \$10 million to Pakistan for gender programs, \$135 million to Burma, \$453 million to Ukraine, \$700 million to Sudan, \$40 million to the Kennedy Center (which is currently closed), \$86 million to Cambodia, \$130 million to Nepal, \$1.4 billion to Egypt for military assistance ...

These are just a few of the items

being funded in these two bills.

Two trillion, three hundred billion dollars may not be a lot of money for the federal government and some of these expenditures may have merit.

But let's look at this another way.

These extra expenditures add up to \$27,204,000,000 billion. If this amount was redirected to out-of-work restaurant workers and owners, 5,440,800 of them could receive \$5,000 a piece.

But Congress sent the money elsewhere without even reading the bill as drafted.

Next time we get to vote, let's get some new blood in there that will at least consider what's good for those in our county that need help and put them before the needs of Pakistan, the Kennedy Center and Egypt.

—David R. Davis
 Florence

BEAUDREAU FOR CITY COUNCIL

I am writing in support of Jo Beaudreau to fill the currently vacant position on the Florence City Council, a term expiring Dec. 31, 2022.

My support is due in part to the fact that Beaudreau's recent campaign for mayor was both positive and outgoing, and also gracefully free from any muckraking. She received an impressive of 2,748 votes (49 percent) from the total 5,624 voters in the mayoral race. It is highly likely that her appointment to the vacant position would be strongly favored by those 2,748 Florence residents who voted for her.

In addition, Beaudreau is a local business owner who is actively involved in our community in many

ways, including as a Chamber of Commerce member, Chamber of Commerce Beautification and Revitalization Team Member (Banner Chair), Chair of the Florence Events Center Gallery Committee, founding member and vice-chair of the City of Florence Public Arts Committee, just to name a few.

She also is involved with The Ford Family Foundation's Ford Institute for Community Building, and with the Rural Development Initiatives.

These community activities offer Beaudreau very broad access to information and learning. They also offer opportunities for her to share in building community awareness to enhance what we have here in Florence and also to strengthen each other in all aspects of our lives.

Beaudreau's small-town rural background, as well as her experiences living in other diverse areas, are a benefit in terms of having provided the tools, ideas, and passion to help her as an advocate for all the people of Florence.

I have enjoyed a quite happy life in Florence since moving here in November 2013, but now have become aware of an increasing divisiveness in our lovely city.

Jo Beaudreau will bring her strong commitment to inclusiveness, teamwork, positivity, compassion, and fair leadership to the city council table.

She also will be a role model to encourage other council members to bring their best cooperative efforts to the table as well.

—Ann Lathrop
 Florence

Please stop complaining about protecting each other

(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.)

My heart is hurting. Two weeks ago on my 41st birthday, I found out that my parents, who live in an assisted living facility up in the Portland area, had just tested positive for coronavirus.

They don't go anywhere.

They don't have visitors besides an occasional masked, socially distant patio visit by one or two of their three daughters and a handful of grandkids.

I haven't had a visit with my parents since February that wasn't out in the cold or through a window. They haven't had much of a visit with their newest granddaughter who was born this past May — and at this rate, my father never will.

He's laying in a bed dying three hours away from me and I'm now faced with the decision of either choosing to go see him (which their facility will allow with strict restrictions) and then isolating myself for two weeks when I get home — or not going and living with the fact that I chose not to see my father in his last days.

I will also add that, if I choose to go see him, it also means I will have to cancel two weeks of appointments I

have scheduled with my clients. In addition, my partner will have to either rely on his parents, who live hours away, for childcare, or take those two weeks off to care for our children.

I would also have to rent a motel room for those two weeks of quarantine since I cannot isolate from my children (one of which has asthma) because our house is small.

In addition to that, I would miss my son's 10th birthday and the holidays with my partner and children this

GUEST VIEWPOINT

By Quinn Gates
 Florence

year.

I've chosen not to go see my father. It's been a really hard decision for me and makes me cry every time I think about it.

Sadly, my situation isn't unique. I'm not looking for pity or condolences. My father would likely not make it to next Christmas even if he hadn't gotten COVID-19. I'm not writing this to try to convince anyone to wear a mask to protect those around them or to follow the guidelines set by the CDC or our own governor.

I'm writing this for one reason specifically: to ask everyone to stop complaining.

For as hard as it is to put on my own mask for an 8-plus hour shift knowing

that I've chosen to forgo seeing my father as he lays dying so that I can stay home and fix my clients' hair so they look good for their holiday — hearing them complain about a simple piece of cloth or paper mask on their face for the duration of their appointment makes me want to scream.

So please, stop complaining.

Nobody likes wearing these masks.

Nobody likes having to stay away from their loved ones, especially during the holidays. Everybody is experiencing the same coronavirus fatigue, but there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

So, the next time you are in line at the grocery store, talking to your bank teller or sitting down for your haircut, please remember that we are all in the same boat and let's try to stop being so negative and start being a bit more hopeful — especially since we now have a vaccine on the way.

Coronavirus has touched many of our lives and altered them in some way. Let's try to remember that a lot of people are hurting and need more positivity in their lives right now.

So, put on your mask and smile at the checker next time you go to the grocery store. It's not just your mouth that smiles; eyes smile too.

Maybe even thank them for the often thankless job they are doing.

Spread some love.

We all need some more love these days.

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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 un-sourced 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

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