

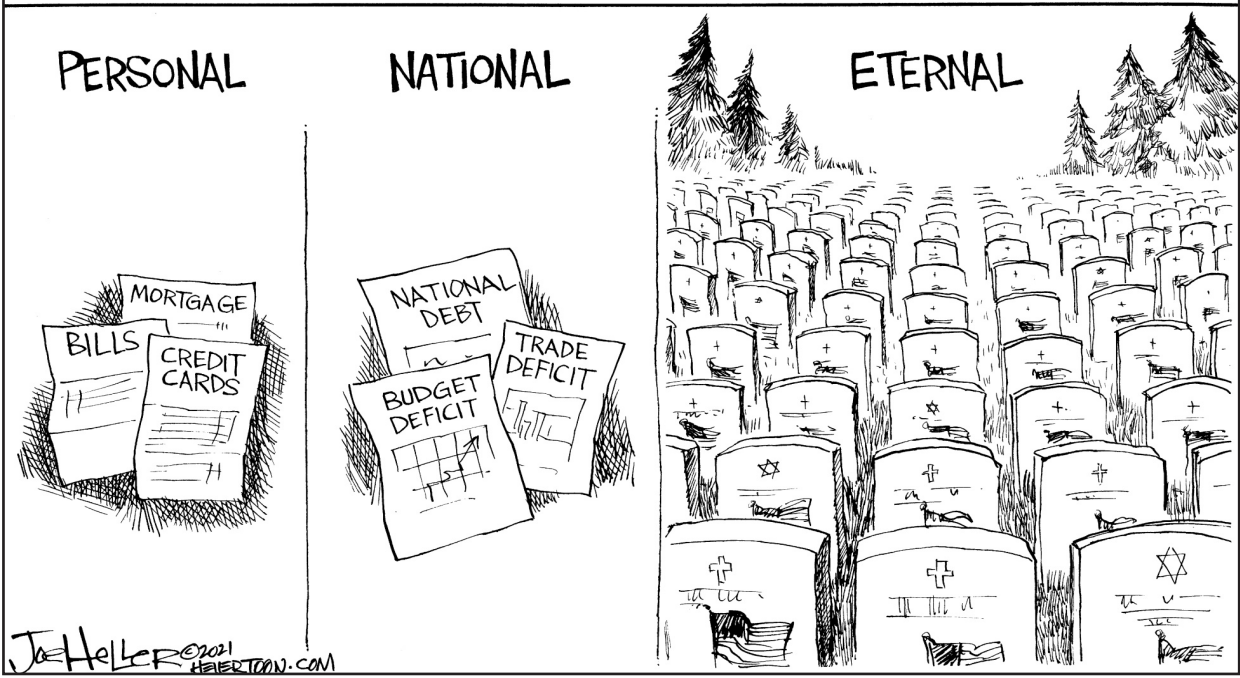
Siuslaw News
 P.O. Box 10
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Opinion

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)

The debt we owe



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Siuslaw News

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Time to develop a plan to benefit all, not just placate a relative few

(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'm writing this Guest Viewpoint in response to Mr. Michael Allen's submission May 22 ("Is Florence Essential In the Fight to Curb Climate Change?")

Does Mr Allen actually think the "carbon problem" facing our world is "the most pressing issue of our time?"

The world was formed 4.5 billion years ago and has gone through many changes and iterations in that time. The latest major volcanic eruption was in Iceland in March 2010 and, since its first spewing of volcanic ash had, in just four days negated every single effort that had been made in the previous five years to control CO2 emissions on the entire planet.

The volcano in Iceland has totally erased every single effort we have made to reduce the evil beast — carbon. And there are around 200 active volcanos on the planet spewing out this crud at any one time, every day. Notably, the wildfires in the western U.S. and Australia this past year alone will negate all the efforts

to reduce carbon in our air for the next two to three years.

In 1991, when Mt. Pinatubo erupted in the Philippines, it spewed out more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere than the entire human race had emitted in all its years on Earth.

GUEST VIEWPOINT By Sam Spayd Florence

To quote Mr. Allen: "Disclosing climate disruptions is the first step to help cities understand their climate risks. After that, they should develop a plan with short- and long-term targets and a procedure for regularly reporting progress."

Do we want our local city council taking time to develop a "Comprehensive Climate Plan" when there are immediate problems we face in our community? Time spent by our city council would be better utilized in dealing with the issues that are right in our face and present a definite challenge to the time our city council has to deal with issues which will have a direct impact upon our lives.

How about dealing with the "dra-

gonian edicts" dictated by the state government which limit or restrict the rights of individuals to free enterprise and allowing businesses to determine their own fate in the free market environment?

There are important issues concerning housing and jobs within our community that the city council should spend time debating and coming to positive solutions. They should be dealing with the vital infrastructure of the city and discover new ways to improve the quality of life for the residents of Florence.

These are the things that the city council should be spending their valuable time deciding, not esoteric issues that will have no long-term impact on the citizens of our fair town.

Now is the time for us to take action to win back our city and develop a plan that will benefit all the people of our town and not just placate those who would think that our actions will save the world.

As Mr. Allen said: "Time is running out. Florence must act now."

Yes, we must act to stop the insanity and make reasonable, intelligent decisions that will have a long-term impact on the livability of our "City on Motion."

Time to develop a plan to benefit all, not just placate a relative few

It's time we practice the "Four P's" and Passionately, Professionally, Productively and Politely share our thoughts and ideas. The Chamber and I have come under attack recently for not taking a stand or actively representing our business community. It is obviously time we shared a polite perspective about what on earth we've been doing.

1) Advocating legislatively for our businesses.

I sit on the Oregon State Chamber of Commerce where we passionately represent the business community with a full time PAC Counsel that work diligently to monitor, inform and lobby for us. I share their weekly reports in the *Chamber Blast* and many times offer an opportunity for our local community to weigh in on how we're represented and use the Voter's Voice to reinforce the OSCC position.

Many unfriendly pieces of legislation have been "killed" before making the cut and then those that do get to the floor are actively lobbied against. This legislative season has been especially tough with COVID restrictions and so much speculation.

2) COVID Advocation.

Yes, the Chamber has been at the table consistently working with the city, county and state to find ways to stay safe and to keep our businesses alive. We have multiple teams that meet weekly and biweekly to create a strong voice at every level of leadership. This has been exceptionally innovative as we've seen government agencies working side by side with Chambers of Commerce and other non-gov-

erning agencies for the benefit of our businesses and communities.

I personally think this is some COVID lemonade and hope this collaboration continues in our future, re-sourcing our community deeper and more effectively.

GUEST VIEWPOINT By Bettina Hannigan President and CEO Florence Area Chamber of Commerce

3) Economic Impact

Since the Chamber wears two hats, one of economic development for our members and community and the second hat tourism development as the marketing contractor for the City. Many of our hospitality businesses are struggling with occupancy restrictions and the staffing struggle that is real. The Chamber, City, Lane Workforce Partnership, Travel Lane County and the Oregon Coast Visitors Association have all been working together to assist in developing staffing to support our front-facing businesses as the season is coming upon us.

On the tourism front, we've developed several new projects including the highway banners (details on FlorenceChamber.com under the Events Tab), the new LED sign, which eventually will be promoting events and other tourism-related materials, and most recently "Sandy Smiles." Sandy the Sticker will be at 100 locations around town sharing 11 different images promoting "I found my smile in Florence, Oregon".

This campaign is free to host and free to the customer. It is designed to get people shopping and visiting Florence area businesses, a map and website page will be available for our locals and visitors to have fun collecting their smiles.

4) Education

The Chamber has hosted and shared many free webinars to support business. These webinars have been helpful on many levels to assist businesses pivot and innovate through this pandemic.

5) Communication

The Chamber's email list is over 950 contacts; the weekly Blast is filled with news and resources. This communication provides the opportunity for Chamber members to share their news and events and provides legislative updates and funding resources. Many times, industry relevant information crosses my desk which is shared privately with members, to assist and resource them.

Obviously, this isn't a comprehensive list, but hopefully it will address those who have chosen to attack an organization which has consistently worked to serve our community before, during and will continue after this horrific pandemic has passed.

Florence, we need to stay kind. Kind to our workers who are weary of mean people and who are struggling with their own COVID related challenges. Let's support our restaurants with patience and understanding. TIP, not just money but a kind word. Let's overcome the mean-spirited behavior with love and respect.

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.

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