

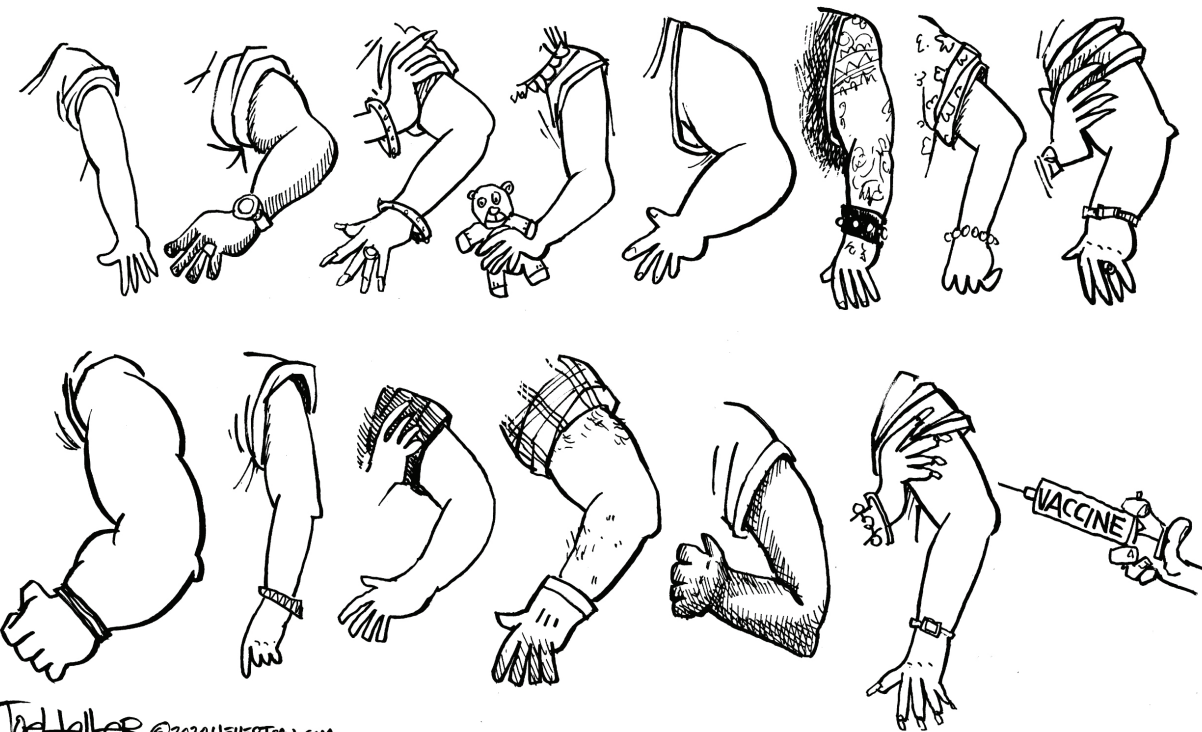
**Cottage Grove Sentinel**  
116 N. Sixth St.  
Cottage Grove, Ore. 97424

# 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)

## A CALL TO ARMS



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### Letters to the Editor Policy

The Sentinel 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anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or without documentation will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside The Sentinel 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.

### Send letters to:

nhickson@cg sentinel.com

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• **Rep. Cedric Hayden**  
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## Time to end 'divide and conquer' mentality



party or administration proposes.

This includes our own Oregon Senator Jeff Merkley, who once told Politico that he would automatically "filibuster any

tantly, this kind of "obstructionist" mentality also runs the risk of delegitimizing future challenges within our system of checks and balances when they could matter

and nominees the current administration has put into play since taking office?

Absolutely not.

Truth be told, I haven't found myself in support of most decisions made so far. But for every Neil Gorsuch that members of Congress fervently oppose purely for the sake of opposition, a Betsy DeVos was confirmed to a post without any real qualifications thanks to divisiveness and the mindset of settling old scores.

A little more than 200 years ago, our nation opposed tyranny in order to pursue the dream of being free. It was part of a necessary step toward independence.

Our forefathers were mature enough to recognize that opposition itself wasn't enough to secure our nation, but that it would take perspective and understanding to help us grow as individuals and a people united.

As we continue through the early part of our nation's own "terrible twos," we need to remember that fundamental truth.

Because unlike that stage we must deal with as parents, in the case of our nation we really do need to act as if the future of the world depended on it...

### From the Editor's Desk

Ned Hickson

and all Supreme Court Justice nominees Trump puts forward."

It was only a year prior to that statement that Republican leadership in our nation's capital did something similar by refusing to consider then-President Obama's nominee, Merrick Garland, for the very same appointment.

And the beat has gone on, threatening to continue into the next administration.

While I agree that any nominee, bill or package proposal seeking congressional approval should be scrutinized for its merits, to enter into that process with a preconceived conclusion and public promise to automatically deny approval merely continues the kind of partisan politics that have turned the wheels of government into the rusted grind of rickety gears that Americans have lost faith in.

Perhaps more impor-

most. This isn't the time to overreach or grandstand simply for the sake of being in opposition or playing it safe within party politics.

Americans are divided because their representatives in Congress have allowed themselves to become divided, simply on the merits of which side of the aisle they happen to sit on.

One of the most basic techniques of winning a war is to divide and conquer. Without question, we have already become a nation divided over the past four years. To bridge the divides, our representatives in Congress must put aside their need to conquer each other and remember that the true casualties of this kind of political war are those who they are supposed to be representing.

Do I agree with or even support all of the decisions, executive orders

As most parents will tell you, every child goes through a stage where they seem to suffer from oppositional personality disorder, fervently opposing even the slightest difference of opinion as if the future of the world depended on it.

Whether it's the "terrible twos" or teens (or both, Lord help you) it's part of a necessary step toward independence and establishing personal perspective on the road to maturity.

However, opposition itself isn't a sign of maturity.

Opposition for the sake of opposition only limits our opportunities, our perspectives and the kind of understanding that helps us grow as individuals.

True maturity happens with the recognition of this fundamental truth.

Over the past several years, I've heard what was at first a growing — and now continuous — rhetoric from Democratic and Republican leaders about the need to either "support" or "reject" everything the opposing

## NO ROOM AT THE INN 2020

