

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)



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anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or without documentation will not be published.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

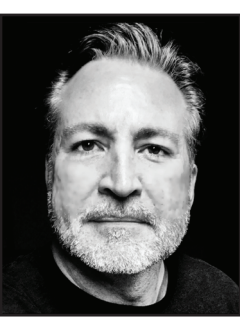
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Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large. Letters must: 1) Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates; 2) Ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, 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@cgsentinel.com

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| <p><b>Oregon state representatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sen. Floyd Prozanski</b><br/>District 4 State Senator<br/>PO Box 11511<br/>Eugene, Ore. 97440<br/>Phone: 541-342-2447<br/>Email: sen.floydprozanski@state.or.us</li> <li>• <b>Rep. Cedric Hayden</b><br/>Republican District 7 State Representative<br/>900 Court St. NE<br/>Salem, Ore. 97301<br/>Phone: 503-986-1407<br/>Email: rep.cedrichayden@state.or.us</li> <li>• <b>Rep. Peter DeFazio</b><br/>(House of Representatives)<br/>405 East 8th Ave.<br/>#2030<br/>Eugene, Ore. 97401</li> </ul> | <p><b>Oregon federal representatives</b></p> <p>Email: defazio.house.gov/contact/email-peter<br/>Phone: 541-465-6732</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sen. Ron Wyden</b><br/>405 East 8th Ave., Suite 2020<br/>Eugene, Ore. 97401<br/>Email: wyden.senate.gov<br/>Phone: (541) 431-0229</li> <li>• <b>Sen. Jeff Merkley</b><br/>Email: merkley.senate.gov<br/>Phone: 541-465-6750</li> <li>• <b>Heather Buch</b><br/>Lane County Commissioner - District 5<br/>Email: Heather.Buch@lane-county.org<br/>125 E. Eighth Ave.<br/>Eugene, OR 97401<br/>Or call 541-682-4203</li> </ul> |
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**High cost of education making it less valuable**

nizations and clubs as well as county, state and federal funds specifically earmarked for college education. It's essentially our tax dollars at work. And make sense since, coincidentally, most of the side effects found on drug labels are the same symptoms I felt while researching annual tuition costs: headache, chest pain, shortness of breath, vision loss, loss of appetite...

**From the Editor's Desk**  
Ned Hickson

While reading about how a group of students has brought a class-action lawsuit against seven colleges for charging the same tuition last year despite the lack of on-campus services and opportunities, I had to nod my head at the need to overhaul our college educational system and its dependency on rising tuition and even higher profiles. My wife and I have attended very helpful scholarship fairs where local community organizations provided information about the many scholarships available. In addition, we've attended workshops discussing everything from how to apply for federal education grants, to tips on interviewing and properly filling out scholarship applications. What we discovered about the scholarship application process is that there is a lot of money out there, available from local orga-

since I've been paying taxes nonstop since I was 17, I have no problem getting a return on my investment to help our kids and others receive a college education. Here's the problem: After much consideration and analysis, including a mathematical formula involving median income combined with cost projections, annual inflation predictions and an old abacus I found at a garage sale, I was able to determine what I believe is the biggest financial challenge facing students and their families when it comes to continuing their education beyond high school: Colleges simply cost too much. In fact, if I didn't know better, I'd say colleges are being run by pharmaceutical companies — which would

mately, with or without a degree, what matters most is a drive to succeed and willingness to work hard for it. No degree can guarantee success over an individual's desire to be successful. Do I want my doctor to have a medical degree? You bet. Should a lawyer be required to have a law degree? Certainly. Would I be OK with a doctor without a medical degree operating on the average lawyer? Most likely. If our kids choose to attend college, we'll find a way to make it happen. The question is whether the rising cost of higher education — coupled with revelations of those wealthy enough buying their way into a prestigious college for their children — are making it less valuable, not more. Especially when compared to what can be achieved with a high degree of dedication and hard work — and the freedom to pursue your life's passions without the debt that so often goes along with the cost of higher education.

**Cottage Grove Sentinel**

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