

EDITORIALS

Getting to a sales-tax state

Oregonians, long proud of having no sales tax, now have two point-of-sales taxes — and one that rides the border of being such a tax.

In addition to the 17 percent state sales tax and 3 percent city sales tax on recreational marijuana enacted in 2017, the Legislature has decided that things associated with transportation need to include sales tax.

On new bicycles that cost more than \$200 — a figure low enough to include the majority of new bikes — a \$15 point-of-sales tax will go toward the state's transportation fund.

New cars also get a sales tax, but in some cases the dealer will have to pay, so this is the new tax that borders on being a true sales tax.

The Legislature also has increased income taxes through a transit tax, at one-tenth of 1 percent.

Polk County cities have long said they need more money for streets. We hope some of these new sales taxes and income tax will trickle down to the cities we live in.

As the Legislature's transportation package collects money, we hope our state will make good use of it by widening highways that need to be made wider and repaving roads that need repaving.

The bigger picture here is a slippery slope we see coming in the form of these sales taxes. You may not smoke recreational marijuana, so that sales tax doesn't affect you. You won't be purchasing a new car or bicycle for a while, so you won't think about that one, either.

If Oregon's elected leaders continue to add sales taxes to items slowly, it won't be long before all of Oregonians are in the boiling pot of sales taxes — no longer getting a penny back on a 99 cent item.

Nearly all the states have a sales tax in one form or another, so maybe it isn't the end of the world. But it is one of those things that Oregonians feel strongly about, and we wonder why no one is complaining as the heat is slowly turned up on these point-of-sales taxes.

What will be the next thing the Legislature will add taxes to, and no one will really complain? Fast food? Specialty coffees? We'll see.



PUBLIC AGENDA

Public Agenda is a listing of upcoming meetings for governmental and nongovernmental agencies in Polk County. To submit a meeting, send it at least two weeks before the actual meeting date to the *Itemizer-ObsERVER* via email (ionews@polkio.com).

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 27

• **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, first floor conference room, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.

THURSDAY, DEC. 28

• **Monmouth-Independence Networks Board of Directors** — 7:30 a.m., Henry Hill Education Support Center, 750 S. Fifth St., Independence. 503-837-0700.

• **Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network** — 3 p.m., 550 Hawthorne Drive SE, Suite 140, Salem. 503-585-4935.

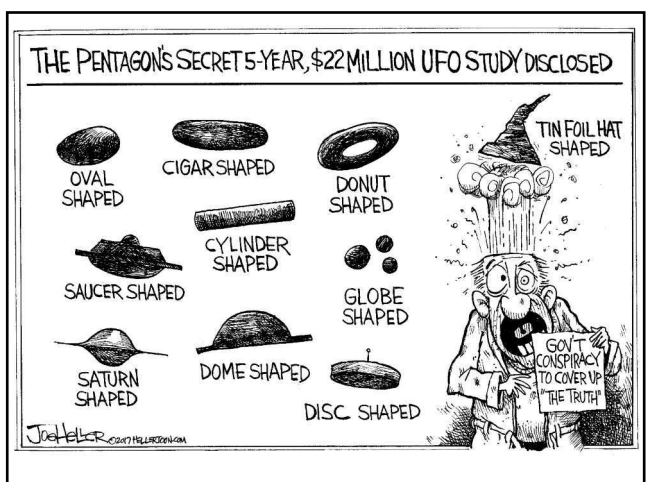
TUESDAY, JAN. 2, 2018

• **Monmouth City Council** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 Warren St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 3, 2018

• **Monmouth Historic Commission** — 6 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 Warren St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.

• **Monmouth Planning Commission** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 Warren St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dallas wrestling has successful fundraiser

The Dallas High School Wrestling team just wrapped up another successful poinsettia fundraiser.

This annual tradition allows us to purchase gear for the team, and this means a lot to us.

We would like to thank everyone who supported us by buying poinsettias, especially Dallas Retirement Village and Capitol Auto Group.

We invite you to come and watch us in action this winter.

On Jan. 6, we will host the Janet Brunner Invitational at

Dallas High School. We also have home dual meets on Jan. 18 and Feb. 1.

Hope to see you there.

*Treve Earhart
Dallas High School Wrestling
Dallas*

End of contract means less FCFD response

I am writing this letter to inform the rural residents that live around Falls City that Falls City Fire Department, as of Jan. 1, 2018, is no longer contracted with Southwest Fire District to respond to fire or medical calls.

This has been a 70-year partnership that we have been able to help you, our

neighbors, out in your time of need.

We will still respond if Southwest requests our help, but unfortunately the Falls City Fire Department equipment is designed for responding to city infrastructure type calls.

We will make every effort to respond and show up to help in your time of need, but until we gear up with new equipment to replace the equipment that Southwest pulled, we will not be able to help on some of the calls.

It has been my honor helping our neighbors, and we regret that the long partnership has ended.

*Chief Bob Young,
Falls City Fire Department
Falls City*

EDITORIALS

Plan ahead, designate

Driving drunk is never OK. During the holidays, it may get more difficult. You may not think you're drunk when you are.

You may think you only had one or two drinks, not realizing that driving buzzed is the same as driving drunk.

Your reactions are dulled, and next thing you know, you could be involved in a fatal collision, one that could have been avoided if you'd handed your keys to a designated driver.

Don't be that person who thinks you are sober enough to drive after a holiday engagement.

Instead, be the one who offers to abstain from drink-

ing so you can make sure everyone else gets home safely.

At the very least, go to the party prepared with a few phone numbers of local taxi companies.

Arrange other transportation home, or ask to spend the night wherever you are.

Driving under the influence will get you hefty fines, possibly get your license revoked, and you'll have a lot of hoops to jump through to get it back.

But that's not the main reason to avoid getting behind the wheel when you've been drinking or smoking marijuana.

The real reason can be seen on the faces of those

around you, the ones you pass on the street or see at your local market.

Your neighbors, family and friends is why it is important to not drive drunk.

It's for their safety — and yours — that it is so important to make alternate plans when you decide to include alcohol or legal, recreational drugs into your celebrations.

We're hoping you all had a very Merry Christmas, and we wish you a Happy New Year, filled with hope and love in all your endeavors.

Drive safely and soberly, and remember that no text is so important that you must answer it while you operate a vehicle.

WANT TO WRITE A LETTER?

Letters to the editor are limited to 300 words. Longer letters will be edited.

Election-related letters of all types are limited to 100 words. Writers are limited to one election-related letter per election season. Election letters from writers outside of Polk County are not accepted.

Each writer is restricted to one letter per 30-day period.

Letters that are libelous, obscene or in bad taste will not be printed. Attacks by name on businesses or individuals will not be printed.

Letters to the editor that are obvious promotions for a business, products or services will not be printed.

The *Itemizer-ObsERVER* does not guarantee the accuracy of facts presented by letter writers; dissenters are welcome to respond. Letter writers who disagree with other published letter writers should maintain a civil discourse and address the subject, not the author.

Letters, like all editorial material submitted to the newspaper, are edited for length, grammar and content.

Letters must include the author's name, address and telephone number. This includes letters submitted via the *I-O's* website. Names and cities of residence are published; street addresses and telephone numbers are used for verification pur-

poses only.

Letters must be submitted from individuals, not organizations, and must be original submissions to the *I-O*, not copies of letters sent to other media.

Letters of thanks to businesses, individuals and organizations are limited to 10 names.

The deadline for letters to the editor is 10 a.m. Monday. Letters submitted may not be retractable after this deadline.

Reach us at:
Mail: Editor, *Polk County Itemizer-ObsERVER*, P.O. Box 108, Dallas, OR 97338.
Fax: 503-623-2395.
Email: ionews@polkio.com.
Office: 147 SE Court St., Dallas.

How to Contact Officials

GOVERNOR
Gov. Kate Brown (Dem.)
160 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-378-4582
Email: via website,
<http://governor.oregon.gov/>

STATE LEGISLATORS
Sen. Arnie Roblan
(District 5, Democrat)
5-417 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1705
sen.arnieroblan@state.or.us
www.oregonlegislature.gov/roblan

Sen. Jackie Winters
(District 10, Republican)
5-301 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1710
sen.jackiewinters@state.or.us
www.oregonlegislature.gov/winters

Sen. Brian Boquist
(District 12, Republican)
5-305 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1712
sen.brianboquist@state.or.us
www.oregonlegislature.gov/boquist

Rep. David Gombert
(District 10, Democrat)
H-471 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1410
rep.davidgombert@state.or.us
www.oregonlegislature.gov/gombert

Rep. Paul Evans
(District 20, Democrat)
H-281 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1420
rep.paulevans@state.or.us
www.oregonlegislature.gov/evans

Rep. Mike Nearman
(District 23, Republican)
H-378 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1423
rep.mikenearman@state.or.us
www.oregonlegislature.gov/nearman

U.S. CONGRESS
Sen. Ron Wyden (Dem.)
221 Dirksen SOB
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: 202-224-5244
Fax: 202-228-2717
Salem office: 707 13th St. SE,
Suite 285, Salem, OR 97301
Phone: 503-589-4555
Email: via website,
www.wyden.senate.gov

Sen. Jeff Merkley (Dem.)
313 Hart SOB
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: 202-224-3753
Fax: 202-228-3997
Salem office: 161 High St. SE,
Suite 250, Salem, OR 97301
Phone: 503-362-8102
Email: via website,
www.merkley.senate.gov

Rep. Kurt Schrader (Dem.)
108 Cannon HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515
Phone: 202-225-5711
Fax: 202-225-5699
Salem office: 544 Ferry St. SE,
Suite 2, Salem, OR 97301
Phone: 503-588-9100
Fax: 503-588-5517
Email: via website,
www.schrader.house.gov

POLK COUNTY Board of Commissioners
850 Main St.
Dallas, OR 97338
Phone: 503-623-8173
www.co.polk.or.us

CITIES
Dallas
187 SE Court St.
Dallas, OR 97338
503-623-2338
www.ci.dallas.or.us
Falls City
299 Mill St.
Falls City, OR 97344
503-787-3631
www.fallscityoregon.gov
Independence
555 S. Main St.
Independence, OR 97351
503-838-1212
www.ci.independence.or.us
Monmouth
151 W. Main St.
Monmouth, OR 97361
503-838-0722
www.ci.monmouth.or.us

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HOW TO REACH US

NEWSROOM

Emily MentzerEditor/Monmouth/Independence Reporterementzer@polkio.com
Lukas Eggen.....Sports Editor.....leggen@polkio.com
Jolene Guzman.....Dallas/Falls City/Polk County Reporterjguzman@polkio.com

DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Heidi LeppinDisplay Advertising Manager (ext.115).....hleppin@polkio.com
Karen Sanks.....Client Services (ext. 118).....ksanks@polkio.com

CLASSIFIED LINE ADVERTISING

Dawn Ohren.....loads@polkio.com

PRODUCTION

Kathy Hugginsiosales@polkio.com
Karyn Presseliosales@polkio.com

Web: www.polkio.com

Phone: 503-623-2373

Fax: 503-623-2395