

# Opinion

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## GUEST EDITORIAL

# Geography snobbery

### Editorial from The (Bend) Bulletin:

Recent polling suggests that Republican challenger Knute Buehler is in a dead heat with Gov. Kate Brown, who enjoys the advantage of incumbency as well as a significant voter-registration edge. State Democratic leaders must be in full panic mode. How else can you explain the party's oh-so-revealing attack Tuesday on Buehler's Tualatin apartment?

Buehler, who also represents Bend in the state House, has been completely open about the fact that he's rented an apartment in the Portland suburb. He has done so, he explained to The Bulletin's editorial board last week, because running for governor requires him to be in close proximity to the state's population centers on the I-5 corridor.

For similar reasons, lawmakers who represent districts on the east side of the Cascades often rent rooms in Salem when the Legislature is in session. Oregon is a big, big state, and daily commutes to the House and Senate simply aren't an option for people representing rural districts, as they are for people representing Portland and Eugene.

Nonetheless, the state Democratic Party announced Tuesday that it had asked Secretary of State Dennis Richardson to investigate Buehler for supposedly moving out of his district and, thus, making himself ineligible to represent it. Party Chair Jeanne Atkins urged voters to "question the integrity of a candidate who draws a state paycheck but has turned his back on his constituents."

It would be tempting to dismiss Atkins' stunt as merely witless. After all, Buehler isn't running for re-election to the House in any case. The Legislature isn't currently in session. His primary residence remains in Bend.

And the suggestion that Buehler, an orthopedic surgeon married to an ophthalmologist, is bending the rules in order to draw a citizen-legislator's paycheck is laughable.

If the arrangement were so shady, why would Buehler tell everyone about it?

The apparent intent of Atkins' attack is to suggest to voters that Buehler is a slippery and rootless carpet-bagger.

She and her party colleagues should have given that approach a bit more thought.

Only one of the two main contenders in this race was born in Oregon, grew up in Oregon and graduated from an Oregon public university (Oregon State). It ain't Brown, though she did earn a law degree from Lewis and Clark College in Portland.

But the real problem with the Democratic Party's decision to fault Buehler for renting a Tualatin apartment is the geographic snobbery it accidentally reveals. Democratic leaders from the I-5 corridor typically take great pains to appear concerned about Oregonians on both sides of the Cascades. They, at least publicly, lament the urban-rural divide that has long characterized Oregon's politics and its culture.

And now Jeanne Atkins comes along and accidentally tells the truth: The state Democratic Party and its fleet of urban legislators don't actually think much about anything outside the I-5 corridor, much less care about it. With the slightest imagination, after all, Atkins would know that it's absolutely necessary for a gubernatorial candidate from a place like Bend – or Ontario or John Day or wherever – to maintain a secondary dwelling in the Portland area. And to spend a lot of time there. That's where many of Oregon's voters are.

Oregon's geography and its development patterns are very real barriers to Buehler in his pursuit of statewide office.

It's ironic that state Democrats have faulted him for doing what's necessary to overcome these barriers given their focus on removing barriers to voting. Is easy participation in the political process good for everyone, in their view, or is it good only when Democrats stand to gain?

It's doubly ironic that the person howling the loudest about Buehler's apartment, Atkins, only recently served as secretary of state, in which capacity she ostensibly defended the fairness of state elections. Yes, we're laughing, too.

Atkins' supposed concern for the Bend residents on whom Buehler "has turned his back" is touching, we suppose. She should rest assured, however, that most of us on this side of the Cascades understand the need for Buehler's Tualatin crash pad and are, in fact, just fine with it.

We're also quite capable of deciding for ourselves which gubernatorial candidate is most likely to represent our interests effectively.



## Your views

### Council's decision on roosters nothing to crow about

The last two issues of the local paper had front-page articles concerning the issue of banning roosters because of their crowing. I really don't feel this is a crisis in our rural community.

Several days ago I had to take a member of my family to the emergency room at the hospital, and was there till after midnight. About midnight, the receptionist left her job to return home or whatever one does after work. I suspect that driving her car on the quiet streets of Baker in the wee hours of the morning probably disturbed some folks, especially her neighbors, but I'm glad she was on duty when we needed her.

Disturbing people at night happens all the time. Train whistles have awakened me for decades. The sanitary service picks up my garbage once a week at about 5 a.m., and I often hear them. Thunderstorms occasionally crack in the middle of the night. And how about fire engines and police cars rushing about in the night, not at all silently. These are necessary services, granted, but I believe raising animals is also necessary. I do not raise chickens, but how do you raise poultry and their produce without roosters?

The articles mentioned that "a rooster... is capable of intermittent noise making." True. So are the above examples. The latest newspaper article also states, "Though it sounds inconsequential, rooster crowing can be highly disruptive." Really? I agree that this matter is inconsequential. I applaud the council for

### Letters to the editor

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paying attention to citizens' concerns, but I question the proposed solution. I think the city council has a lot more critical issues to tackle than banning roosters in a rural area. Consequently, when it comes time for voting for council members, I'm thinking about consulting the roosters before I vote.

Peter Jeffs  
Baker City

### Banning roosters now? It's not necessary in Baker

We are not in favor of the ordinance banning roosters in Baker City. This city probably has had roosters crowing for over 150 years. Why is it that some residents now cannot bear the sound? Why can't these people find some way to control their environment so they are not irritated by this? Close the window, put a pillow over your head. Much of Baker City is designated as a large animal zone. People buy homes knowing that this is so. Now we are going to make an exception for one species that a few find annoying. You are setting the bar pretty

low. Will you ban other animals as the issues come up? Get rid of your lamb, get rid of your goat, get rid of your pig. And then this won't be a premier rural living experience anymore. We put up with the night noise of trains, sirens, overhead helicopters, freeway traffic and barking dogs. Please save the roosters.

Barbara and Larry Rockenbrant  
Baker City

### Puzzled by public lands ad

"In Support of Public Lands." This is the heading of a recent advertisement in the Herald. I keep looking this over, wondering what is the intent or purpose and just find it interesting and puzzling.

Seven bullet points of positions this group supports and four that they do not support in the management and regulation of our public lands. I see nothing anyone would strongly disagree to. Your views are not original nor unique. I have shown this ad to different people and asked for an opinion or insight. More often the answer I receive is, "oh it's just those Democrats." I say, "no this has nothing to do with politics we are now nonpartisan."

Fortunately for you, come November, you folks will have a clear choice to back your commitment with a vote for Baker County Commission Chair Bill Harvey. Mr. Harvey has and will continue to speak and stand for what you value and support.

Wanda Ballard  
Baker City

## GUEST EDITORIAL

### Editorial from The Los Angeles Times:

U.S. automakers breathed a bit easier this week after President Donald Trump and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker announced an agreement to shelve threatened U.S. tariffs on imported autos and retaliatory European tariffs on U.S. goods while the two sides negotiate lower trade barriers. And if the episode eventually produces a true free-trade agreement between Europe and the United States, it will be a win for businesses, workers and consumers on both sides of the Atlantic.

But it wouldn't validate the methods this president has been using to try to change our trading partners' practices. It's not just the bullying of U.S. allies and the blatant violations of existing trade deals that are troubling. It's his unilateral moves to launch, intensify and sustain these trade fights, picking winners and losers in the United States along the way, which betray a dangerously expansive and abusive view of executive power.

Consider the steps the administration has taken, free of congressional review

or intervention, to try to reduce China's enormous trade surplus with the United States.

First, it imposed 25 percent tariffs on \$34 billion worth of Chinese industrial goods July 6 as punishment for that country's "unreasonable or discriminatory" policies on technology and intellectual property. It has also teed up tariffs on an additional \$16 billion worth of Chinese goods to dampen China's ambition to dominate important new technologies. But those are just the appetizers: Trump has threatened to impose tariffs on every Chinese item that Americans import.

China responded by slapping tariffs on an equal amount of U.S. goods, particularly farm products. Canada, Mexico, the European Union and other trading partners hit with Trump tariffs have done the same, targeting with especial vehemence U.S. producers in states that supported Trump, such as Midwestern farmers and manufacturers.

With blowback rising in this country, the administration sought to ease the pain of the retaliatory tariffs by dipping into taxpayers' pockets, again with

no review or approval by Congress. On Tuesday the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that it was borrowing \$12 billion from the Treasury to support some (but not all) of the farmers whose exports have stalled and prices have dropped in the face of Chinese tariffs. And just farmers not, say, Mid-Continent Nail, the U.S. fastener manufacturer whose business has been racked by Trump's tariffs on imported steel. Even lawmakers who share Trump's "America First" view of trade should be outraged at the president using tax dollars to pick winners and losers.

As for Europe, it's worth remembering that the U.S. and the EU were negotiating a free-trade pact before Trump arrived and declared his distaste for multilateral deals. On Wednesday the negotiations seemed to be back on track with the same goals, albeit with far more drama. But trade relations with China and the rest of the world are still in turmoil. At some point soon, Congress needs to wake up and reclaim the authority it gave the White House over tariffs.

## CONTACT YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

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