

Opinion

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Rebating revenue from cap-and-trade

Editorial from The (Bend) Bulletin:

As the Oregon Legislature inches toward adopting cap-and-trade legislation, problems in the proposed law remain. A biggie is this: The state constitution requires that all fuel taxes be used for public highways and roads for construction, repairs and maintenance or for roadside rest areas.

State Sen. Lee Beyer, D-Springfield, hopes to change that. He sees the new revenue the way most of the current crop of lawmakers do, as something to be taken in by state government and spent as lawmakers see fit. To get that power, he's talking about asking Oregonians to change the constitution to give the Legislature more freedom to spend fuel taxes.

Unless the constitution is changed, that can't happen.

That means the state cannot use millions of dollars of the new revenue derived from the higher gas prices from the carbon tax bill on anything but roads. Lawmakers would like to use that money to help folks buy electric cars, to build public transit systems or to help truck drivers purchase new, fuel-efficient engines.

We've got a better suggestion than changing the constitution. Lawmakers should find a way to make the carbon cap revenue-neutral. It should return every dime to Oregonians. Oregonians should decide how to spend it, not lawmakers. Models of how a carbon tax would work nationally have recommended that approach — giving the revenue to Americans, dividing it up per capita. It would soften the impact of the increases in fuel costs, build support for the tax and give citizens, not lawmakers, control.

There are various other models for doing it. British Columbia offers an example. It added a carbon tax to fuel prices in 2008, but at the same time it reduced corporate and personal income taxes, according to the New York Times. The tax has cut emissions — people are driving more fuel efficient cars — but hasn't killed the economy.

Oregon legislators would be better off putting a rebate plan into the existing bill than to try to persuade that once again, lawmakers know best how to spend our money.



Thanking those who sacrificed

Every year, I'm struck by the powerful — and often, opposing — emotions that Memorial Day stirs.

We celebrate our freedoms, and yet, we mourn the cost that they required. We look ahead to a bright future, while we remember the trials and challenges of the past. We honor those who served, but we grieve their loss.

Celebration, and sadness. Gratitude, and remorse. Hope, and helplessness. Memorial Day is unique in evoking such a broad spectrum of feeling, because it is this holiday that speaks most keenly to our highest ideals, as well as the steep price we are willing to pay for them.

Sadly, it is also a day that, for many, has lost its significance. President George W. Bush would often tell the story of asking schoolchildren what the meaning of Memorial Day is, only to have them respond, "That's the day the pool opens!"

For many Oregonians, Memorial Day is primarily the unofficial start of the summer recreation season, a chance to enjoy our amazing forests and beaches, rivers and lakes and mountain trails.

We should enjoy all that our state has to offer, but we should also keep in mind the words of another president, John F. Kennedy: "A nation reveals itself not only by the citizens it produces but also by the citizens it honors, the citizens it remembers."

We must remember the fallen because the courage, the strength, the selflessness and the sacrifice of each one of these brave warriors is the ideal to which we all should aspire.



KELLY FITZPATRICK

On this Memorial Day, I think of Bob Maxwell, a great American and Oregonian whom we lost earlier this month. Bob was a World War II combat soldier, and until his death, the only Medal of Honor recipient still living in our state. While he did not die fighting for our country he fearlessly faced death in a way few Americans ever have.

He earned that medal — the U.S. military's highest decoration for valor — for the courage he showed during a battle in September 1944, when a live German hand grenade was tossed in the midst of his squad. Without a second thought, he hurled himself upon it, shielding his comrades from the blast with nothing but a blanket and his unprotected body.

Maxwell cheated death that day, though he carried shrapnel in his body for the rest of his life. It was a life he dedicated in humble service to the veteran community, and to the memories of his brothers in arms, who never got the chance to come home.

We must never forget the true cost of war. It is a price paid not in dollars and cents, but with the blood of our heroes. They were nothing less than the best America had to offer, those who answered the call when their nation needed them, who paid the ultimate price to protect us and our way of life.

The stories of their sacrifice are forever woven into the fabric of our nation and its history. They gave their

lives on the foreign soils of Europe, the black sands of the South Pacific, the frozen reaches of Korea, in the sweltering jungles of Vietnam, the scorching deserts of Afghanistan and Iraq, and in many other places across the globe.

The United States lost more than 400,000 of its sons and daughters in World War II — 2,826 from Oregon. 54,246 American service members gave their lives in Korea (287 Oregonians); 58,209 in Vietnam (791 from our state).

In Iraq and Afghanistan, we lost 6,713 American service members — 142 Oregonians. Each one of their names is etched on slabs of granite that form the heart of the Afghan/Iraqi Freedom Memorial, located just a few steps from the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs office building. Each one of their names is read aloud each year at our Memorial Day ceremony, as we seek to honor and remember their sacrifice.

Each one represents the loss of a bright and shining light in the lives of their families, a pain that they feel each and every day — not just on Memorial Day. We remember and honor their sacrifice as well. They, too, paid a great price for the freedoms we now enjoy.

On behalf of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, I urge all Oregonians to take a moment this Memorial Day, to remember our fallen heroes who gave their lives in service to our nation, and say, "Thank you."

Kelly Fitzpatrick is a U.S. Army veterans and the director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Trump needs to work despite ongoing investigations

Editorial from The New York Daily News:

After storming out of a scheduled White House meeting about infrastructure with Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, President Trump declared all legislative work dead until Democrats drop their oversight activities.

"You can't investigate and legislate simultaneously — it just doesn't work that way," he tweeted later.

Oh? Bill Clinton brokered several bi-

partisan bills with a Republican Congress despite years of investigation that concluded in impeachment. George W. Bush got some big things done despite an investigation into the outing of CIA operative Valerie Plame. Barack Obama navigated delicate budget and debt-ceiling negotiations during probes of ATF gun-running, IRS targeting and deaths in Benghazi.

Trump's meltdown, which feels an awful lot like tantrums that derailed negotiations on immigration and guns, was supposedly

sparked by Pelosi saying, after a closed-door meeting with House Democrats, that the president is "engaged in a cover-up."

That singed his thin skin. Never mind that in 2013 Trump accused the Obama administration of a "MASSIVE COVERUP" on Benghazi. And had spent much of the previous year calling him a Kenya-born, illegitimate occupant of the office.

Coup de disgrace: Wednesday, after insisting "I don't do coverups," Trump added, "I'm the most transparent president probably in

the history of this country."

Let's see. The Mueller report disclosed that he told former White House counsel Don McGahn to lie about his attempt to have the special counsel fired. He's publicly declared he will ignore all House subpoenas. And his treasury secretary is blocking the release of tax returns to which an IRS internal memo says Congress is lawfully entitled.

The Oval Office, where the President works, is a kitchen. If Trump can't stand the heat, he has options.

CONTACT YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

President Donald Trump: The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C. 20500; 202-456-1414; fax 202-456-2461; to send comments, go to www.whitehouse.gov/contact.

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley: D.C. office: 313 Hart Senate Office Building, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C., 20510; 202-224-3753; fax 202-228-3997. Portland office: One World Trade Center, 121 S.W. Salmon St. Suite 1250, Portland, OR 97204; 503-326-3386; fax 503-326-2900. Pendleton office: 310 S.E. Second St. Suite 105, Pendleton 97801; 541-278-1129; merkley.senate.gov.

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden: D.C. office: 221 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20510; 202-224-5244; fax 202-228-2717. La Grande office: 105 Fir St., No. 210, La Grande, OR 97850; 541-962-7691; fax, 541-963-0885; wyden.senate.gov.

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Oregon State Treasurer Tobias Read: oregon.treasurer@ost.state.or.us; 350 Winter St. NE, Suite 100, Salem OR 97301-3896; 503-378-4000.

Oregon Attorney General Ellen F. Rosenblum: Justice Building, Salem, OR 97301-4096; 503-378-4400.

Oregon Legislature: Legislative documents and information are available online at www.leg.state.or.us.

State Sen. Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario): Salem office: 900 Court St. N.E., S-301, Salem, OR 97301; 503-986-1730. District office: P.O. Box 1027, Ontario, OR 97914; 541-889-8866.

State Rep. Lynn Findley (R-Vale): Salem office: 900 Court St. N.E., H-475, Salem, OR 97301; 503-986-1460. Email: LynnFindley@oregonlegislature.gov

Baker City Hall: 1655 First Street, P.O. Box 650, Baker City, OR 97814; 541-523-6541; fax 541-524-2049. City Council meets the second and fourth Tuesdays at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers. Mike Downing, Loran Joseph, Randy Schiewe, Lynette Perry,

Arvid Andersen, Ken Gross and Doni Bruland.

Baker City administration: 541-523-6541. Fred Warner Jr., city manager; Dustin Newman, police chief; John Clark, fire chief; Michelle Owen, public works director.

Baker County Commission: Baker County Courthouse 1995 3rd St., Baker City, OR 97814; 541-523-8200. Meets the first and third Wednesdays at 9 a.m.; Bill Harvey (chair), Mark Bennett, Bruce Nichols.

Baker County departments: 541-523-8200. Travis Ash, sheriff; Jeff Smith, roadmaster; Matt Shirliff, district attorney; Alice Durlinger, county treasurer; Stefanie Kirby, county clerk; Kerry Savage, county assessor.

Baker School District: 2090 4th Street, Baker City, OR 97814; 541-524-2260; fax 541-524-2564. Superintendent: Mark Witty. Board meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. Council Chambers, Baker City Hall, 1655 First St.; Andrew Bryan, Kevin Cassidy, Chris Hawkins, Katie Lamb and Julie Huntington.