

# Opinion

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## OUR VIEW

# GOP: Find way to win elections

Two efforts to recall Gov. Kate Brown stalled Monday, sending the clear message that while many voters are dissatisfied with her performance she isn't going anywhere anytime soon.

Both efforts failed by substantial margins.

There are a lot of things that make the state's recall system important — in fact, crucial in some respects — but this latest recall effort was a waste of time.

A lot of voters in Oregon don't like Brown. They don't like her policies or her political philosophy. Especially east of the Cascades, the governor's popularity isn't as high in some areas as she or her supporters would like.

In other sections of the state, the governor doesn't face that problem and her policies are considered sound.

Our political system is designed where fractures in public opinion are common and rarely does a politician gain the kind of widespread popularity they seek.

The recall system in Oregon is needed, but it should be utilized only in the most serious circumstances. Simply disliking the governor isn't really sufficient ground to launch a recall effort. We concede anyone can be recalled for any reason, but that should not be a blank check to settle political grudges.

The recall tool is a necessary one, but it should be reserved for those who abuse their office, commit crimes or blatant breaches in ethics.

If one does not like the current chief executive of the state or the nation there is already a process instilled into our system to change it. It's called elections.

Republican party leaders, especially, should have stepped into the recall effort and squashed it. Not because it was wrong — we've already conceded recalls are sometimes necessary — but because it was a waste of time.

If Republicans really want to change leadership in Oregon, they should work hard to find a candidate that can beat a Democrat for the governor's slot.

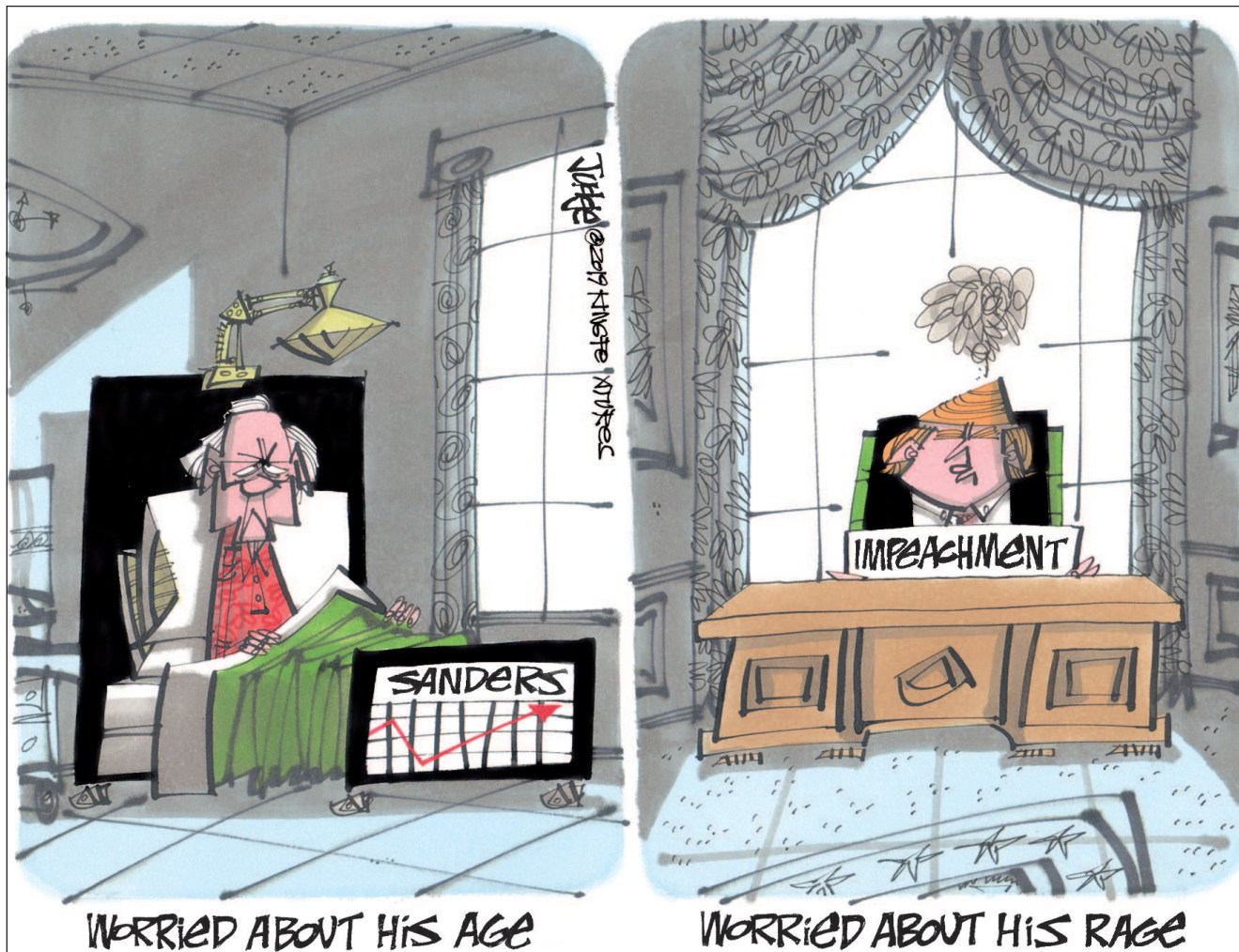
That isn't as easy as it would seem — just review the last two elections for proof — but it needs to be a priority.

There also remains a host of serious political issues impacting our state right now that deserve the undivided attention of GOP leaders. Spending time and effort on a failed recall effort isn't a viable method for the future.

We in Eastern Oregon don't live in a vacuum. Generally, the region is a conservative stronghold. But other portions of the state lean in a different political direction. We may believe our conservative values are paramount, but we — and the Republican Party — must convince the rest of the state.

Wasting time on a recall effort isn't going to get us there.

*Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the Baker City Herald. Columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the Baker City Herald.*



## OTHER VIEWS

### Editorial from Bloomberg News:

Do economic sanctions serve U.S. policy objectives? An important new report from the Government Accountability Office raises the question, but supplies an unsatisfactory answer: Although the departments of Treasury, State and Commerce all pay close attention to the impact of specific sanctions on their targets, there's no reliable way to assess whether — or even to what extent — broader objectives are being served.

Gauging the success of sanctions isn't an exact science. Officials may, for instance, be able to tell when a targeted bank has ceased to enable money transfers to a rogue regime, but if the regime finds other ways to get cash, then the goal hasn't been reached. On the other hand, if a regime continues to finance terrorism despite being denied access to formal banking channels, that doesn't automatically represent a failure — after all, perhaps it could've done much more harm if it was unrestrained.

All the same, there are ways to improve the chances that sanctions are effective. The first is a clear articulation of goals, which has not been the strongest suit of President Donald Trump's administration. To cite the most obvious example, it's hard to tell whether the sanctions Trump has imposed on Iran are designed

to curtail its nuclear program, discourage its other menacing behavior or overthrow its regime. The GAO found that “evolving foreign-policy goals” — an elegant piece of bureaucratic politesse — make it harder for officials to tell if sanctions are working.

In addition to clarifying its objectives, the U.S. should always seek to coordinate with other countries when imposing sanctions. The report notes that such measures tend to be more effective when “implemented through international organizations.” As obvious as this seems, the Trump administration frequently makes no effort to get its allies on board. America's sheer economic clout makes its unilateral sanctions as effective as international ones, but regimes are more likely to mend their ways when faced with multinational approbation. Making appropriate exemptions for humanitarian goods and services, meanwhile, could both ameliorate the pain for civilians and ensure wider international support.

Finally, the Trump administration could improve the effectiveness of sanctions by conducting periodic reviews to judge if its goals are being achieved and presenting progress reports to Congress and the public. That would help it coordinate policy across the executive branch, sharpen its focus and encourage broader support for its objectives.

This is all the more important because Trump has imposed sanctions with more enthusiasm than any of his predecessors. One analysis shows almost 1,500 individuals, companies and institutions are now on the Treasury's sanctions list. In 2018 alone, Trump added more than 700 — or 50% more than had ever been added in a single year. On Friday, the administration threatened Turkey with “very powerful sanctions” over its offensive in Syria. Whether it plans to act on the threat remains to be seen — but the readiness to invoke it reflects the fact that the traditional tools for transnational problem-solving are losing their edge. Diplomatic solutions are harder to achieve when rogue states have more power to resist American coercion, not least because they can rely on other powerful actors, such as China and Russia, to overlook their roguishness. Military solutions have been discredited by spectacular failures in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Sanctions can be a good alternative to futile diplomacy and violent conflict: They can impose a penalty for bad behavior, quickly and with relatively little cost to the U.S. But, as with war and diplomacy, they should be employed with care and forethought, as the GAO report illustrates. It should be required reading in the White House.

# Early cold snap pulls curtain on ash tree's show

The record-shattering October chill, even as it was pilfering my bank account to keep the furnace stoked with kilowatt-hours, was stealing into my yard and ruining the riot of color I've come to expect.

I believe I am entitled to be a trifle annoyed about this.

The usual autumn explosion of eye-watering yellow that is our ash tree serves as that venerable canopy's most illustrious contribution to the place.

(Although not its most comforting — the shade it casts on a torrid August afternoon earns that honor.)

There is no sight I relish more than sunlight bursting through the yellowing leaves in the late afternoon of a clear October day, an especially fetching combination of colors and textures.

This year I noticed, along about the middle of September, that on a few minor limbs the ash leaves had already taken on their autumnal tinge. This whetted my appetite for the show to come.

Except then, on a blustery day late last week, I stepped outside and heard a curious sound. It was a low rustling of the sort you sometimes hear in the deep woods when a deer, as yet unseen, is slinking through the foliage.

I realized, though, that this noise was coming from above, and specifically from the southwest corner of our lot where the ash tree dominates.

I looked up and noticed, for the first time, that the tree had shed a



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considerable percentage of its leaves.

More conspicuous, though, was the color of the leaves scattered about the grass, which was still a lush green.

The leaves were a dusty gray-green not dramatically different from the shade of the lawn, which I suspect is why I hadn't noticed them before.

I walked through this scrim of leaves and the source of the noise was immediately obvious. The leaves were as crispy as corn flakes, and as desiccated. Even a gentle breeze set in motion the leaves still hanging above, creating a cacophony of scraping not so different I suppose, in principle if not in melody, from the way a cricket produces its chirping song.

I'm no arborist but it seemed obvious to me what had happened.

The previous few frigid nights had in effect frost-dried the ash leaves before they could reveal, in the absence of green chlorophyll, the yellow pigment so pleasing to my eye.

The temperature had plunged into the teens on three straight nights — Oct. 10-12 — setting a record on the first two of those days at 15 and 16 degrees, respectively.

My research (which consisted, as so much else does these days when the matter is of no great importance, of a brief Google search) turned up the not-terribly-interesting and also tongue-twisting fact that the particular pigments at play are xanthophylls.

(Each of the other colors that makes fall foliage so attractive has its own multisyllabic source.)

The realization that I would be deprived of the ash tree's annual display disappointed me to a greater extent, I think, than I would have imagined had I thought about it hypothetically.

Those glistening yellow leaves, and the yearly task of raking them into pungent piles, marks the gentle passage of time as memorably, and reliably, as sweeping snow from the stoop or nearly dislocating my shoulder trying to coax the lawnmower into firing after its long hibernation in the cold shed.

The early hard freeze seems not to have had such a dramatic effect on our willows, the other prodigious leaf producers, so perhaps we will not be completely bereft.

But to me the slender willow leaves are a poor substitute for the robust ash leaves, which accumulate in a proper fashion, hiding the dormant grass as thoroughly as a heavy fall of snow.

I've noticed, since my discouraging interval in the yard, that the trio of frigid mornings similarly affected a number of other trees around town.

But fortunately many seem to have emerged with their xanthophylls and other pigments intact.

I have seen many weeping birches, which I must concede can put my ash in the shade, so to speak, that are near the height of their yellow glory.

Quite a few maples also seem to have endured the arctic onslaught.

This is soothing, but not completely satisfying.

I am left to wait for my ash to complete what this year is the grim process of shedding its leaves, and for the first snow to come along and dress up the drab branches that for one autumn never shined at all.

I wish no ill to the mountain goats that hang around Twin Lakes high in the Elkhorns.

But when I learned recently about how one of these animals came to its demise I couldn't suppress the thought that this particular goat got what was coming to it.

The Elkhorns are home to the largest mountain goat population in Oregon, and Twin Lakes, a pair of tarns in a glacier-carved valley on the west side of the range, is the goats' favorite place to congregate.

Because the goats are rarely hunted — the state sells just eight tags annually for goat hunts in the Elkhorns — they are far less skittish in the presence of humans than other large mammals such as deer and elk.

They are as a result far more annoying.

I've camped overnight a few times at Twin Lakes and, in common with many other backpackers, I had to frequently dissuade goats, with varying degrees of success, to quit nosing around the tent.

Wildlife biologists from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) Baker City office have told me they receive occasional complaints from people about the persistent goats, and their nonchalance around people. I understand their concern — adult mountain goats of both genders are equipped with a pair of sharp horns capable of inflicting grievous damage.

Just recently Justin Primus, assistant district biologist at the ODFW office, told me that an Oregon State Police wildlife officer, investigating the report of a dead goat at Twin Lakes, found that the animal had choked to death on a nylon stuff sack for a backpacking tent.

This is unfortunate, but not surprising.

From what I've seen of the goats, their tastes aren't especially specific. The animals appeared to be as inclined to nibble tender alpine grass as the less palatable concoctions of our chemistry labs. And gluttony, as history shows, tends to come to a bad end.

Jayson Jacoby is editor of the Baker City Herald.