

OUR VIEW

Carbon bill: Yes, it's back

Oregon Republicans most likely understood at the end of the last session that the controversial carbon emission issue wasn't going to go away.

Already, one of the architects of the carbon emission reduction bill that failed during the last session is hard at work crafting a new proposal.

Readers probably remember that Senate Republicans walked out of the 2019 session, a decision that destroyed hopes by Democrats to push their favored carbon emission blueprint into law.

The bill was designed to slash the state's greenhouse gas emissions and generate funds to use on a host of environmental programs.

There is also, apparently, a push by an environmental group to put a carbon emission reduction measure before voters.

Sen. Michael Dembrow, D-Portland, the lawmaker who led the effort for the carbon emission reduction legislation, is working to simplify a new bill and that should be good news for everyone, especially voters.

That's because the original piece of legislation was a confusing tome that created a host of questions from critics.

A more narrowly tailored piece of legislation is needed because there isn't any doubt — or shouldn't be — that climate change is real and we all need to discover a way to address it.

But we can't develop a solution on the backs of the rural residents of Oregon. Nor barge ahead with a solution that ignores the valid concerns of those of us who live and work and play in the great rural areas of Oregon.

Dembrow and his Democratic supporters on a new carbon emission bill must find a middle ground with Republicans on this issue, and that is going to be a pretty tall order.

The well between the two parties on this issue has, indeed, been poisoned. But that shouldn't mean lawmakers throw up their hands and walk away. This is an important issue, and just because it was bungled in the last session doesn't mean it should be discarded. What must be avoided is another long, drawn-out political battle that ends with the minority party walking away from the capital.

No one is going to say finding a solution will be easy. It won't be. Democracy is a messy business sometimes, and the last session's battles over the carbon reduction initiative clearly reinforce that scenario.

The Democrats staked their legislation success last session on a bill that was essentially a prototype on political overreach. They must work with their political brethren in both the House and Senate to find a viable solution.

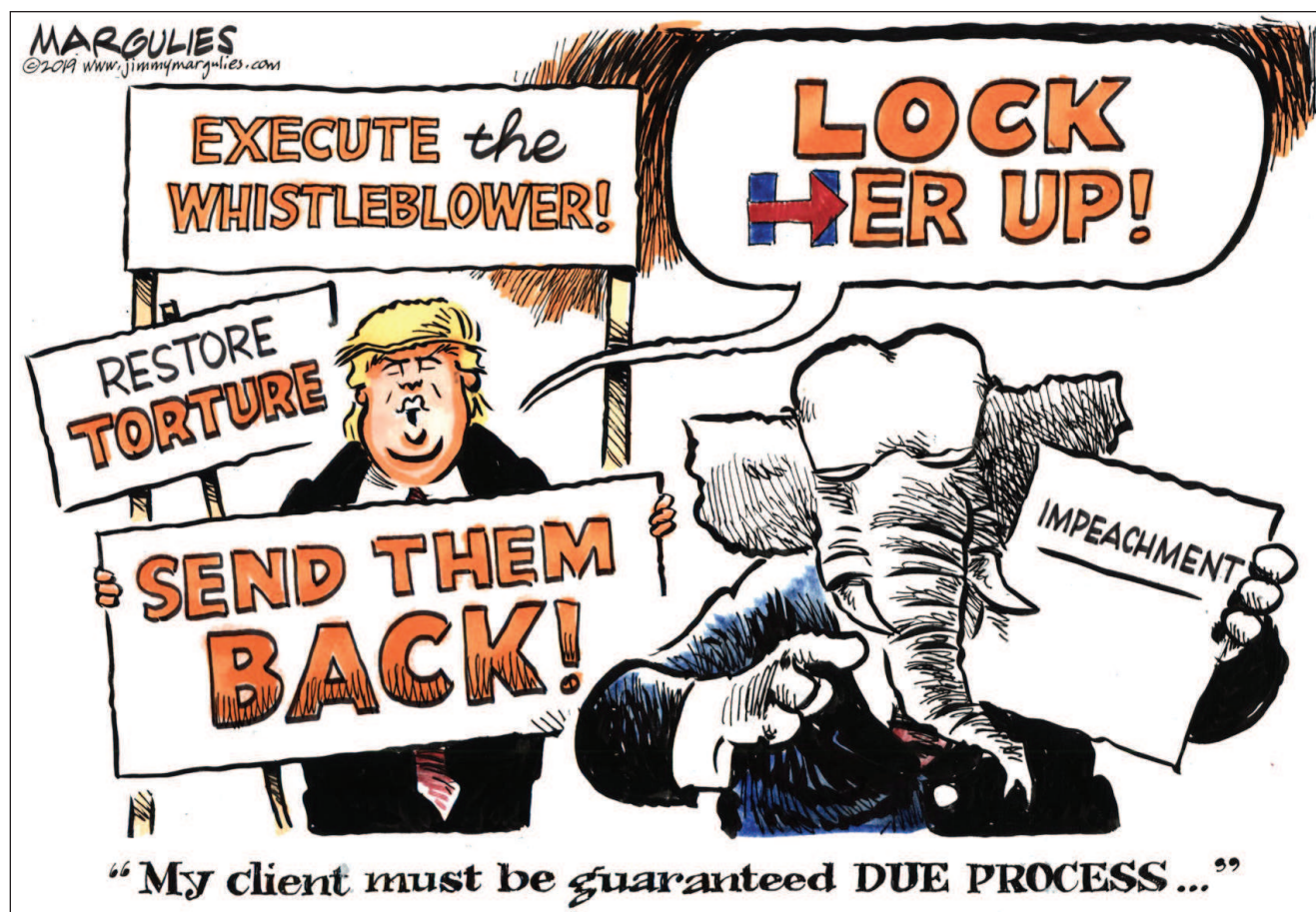
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Impeach: Focusing on facts

JON HEALEY

An anonymous whistleblower's complaint about President Trump's July 25 phone call with new Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy teed up two questions for lawmakers in September: What exactly did Trump do, and how bad was it?

It has taken weeks, but now the House may be able to focus its attention, and the public's, on just those two issues.

House Democrats had leaped on the whistleblower's complaint as soon as the administration (belatedly) turned it over, with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi instructing a number of committees to begin an impeachment inquiry. Three of those panels — the committees on intelligence, foreign relations and government oversight — started summoning witnesses and requesting documents.

But from the start, the process was fraught with fights over how it was being conducted. The administration flatly refused to cooperate, saying the process was illegitimate because the full House hadn't voted to authorize it. Never mind that there's no such requirement in the Constitution, or that the investigations that led to the impeachment efforts against Presidents Nixon and Clinton started before the House voted to authorize a formal inquiry. Trump and his allies have devoted countless tweets and on-camera comments to Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam B. Schiff and the bias he has allegedly shown against Trump.

After witnesses started complying with subpoenas compelling them to give depositions, Trump and GOP lawmakers shifted tacks, complaining that the

testimony was being taken in private and that Trump wasn't able to send his lawyers or confront his accusers. Although that misconstrued the process — the House impeachment process isn't a trial, it's more like an indictment — Republicans were correct that the leaks coming out of the private sessions seemed one-sided and damaging to the president.

There was so much noise about the process, the public hasn't been able to sink its teeth into the substance. That should change now, thanks to the resolution the House adopted Thursday on a largely party-line vote. The measure gives the GOP much of what it wanted, putting the House on record authorizing the inquiry, opening more of it to public view, giving Republicans the same subpoena powers the minority party had in previous impeachment inquiries, and giving the president the right to participate when the House Judiciary Committee considers potential articles of impeachment.

Granted, Republicans will continue to complain about the process. But the move to public hearings will allow lawmakers and voters to see how much evidence Democrats such as Schiff have amassed on how the Trump administration pressured Zelenskiy to conduct two investigations aimed at helping Trump's reelection prospects, including one into a Ukrainian energy company that employed the son of former Vice President

Joe Biden.

Judging just by the leaked opening statements from witnesses and comments by lawmakers who've attended the depositions, Democrats have assembled a persuasive case that people supposedly speaking for the president, including his lawyer Rudy Giuliani, insisted that Zelenskiy publicly commit to those investigations before Zelenskiy would be granted a coveted White House visit and, possibly, nearly \$400 million in badly needed military aid. But that's a filtered view of the proceedings thus far; the open hearings will give a fuller picture.

Once the facts are established, then lawmakers have to decide what they mean. If Trump abused the power of his office to pressure a foreign government to conduct investigations aimed at helping Trump win reelection, how bad is that? Trump has said repeatedly that his actions were "perfect." His acting chief of staff tried to shrug off the idea of a quid pro quo, saying presidents do this sort of thing all the time (before walking back his comments later in the day). Top congressional Republicans have insisted that Trump was simply trying to root out corruption, and that's completely appropriate.

The many Democrats who've been eager to impeach Trump, meanwhile, have to consider this issue from a different angle. After they lay out the case against Trump's handling of Ukraine, will voters say, "Is that all you've got?"

Jon Healey is the Los Angeles Times' deputy editorial page editor.

OTHER VIEWS

What we can learn from the raid that killed Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi

Editorial from Newsday:

There is much to say about the raid that killed Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and even more to learn.

Begin with congratulations to the unknown military and intelligence personnel who pulled it off. The skill and bravery of the planners and the troops on the ground were essential to the success of the mission. It was extremely risky, like the surprise attack in 2011 that resulted in the death of Sept. 11 mastermind Osama bin Laden. The eight helicopters faced gunfire on their way to al-Baghdadi's compound in northern Syria. And President Donald Trump was right to prioritize the pursuit of the murderous al-Baghdadi. His extreme brutality in beheading captives and setting others on fire, all captured on video, was an effective recruiting tool for jihadists to join his caliphate and a stark warning to Western powers.

But while the world can find relief in his demise, we all must understand the many lessons that emerged from the raid.

Its success doesn't mean the fight against ISIS is over. Cells of fighters, large and small, lurk all over the world. Our nation must stay vigilant and continue to pursue any future leaders of ISIS. A positive sign: The day after the raid that killed al-Baghdadi, another American attack apparently killed his likely successor.

We need allies. Going it alone doesn't work. American intelligence officials worked closely with their Kurdish and Iraqi counterparts to pinpoint al-Baghdadi's location. The Kurds, in particular, provided essential information, despite Trump's decision earlier this month to pull U.S. troops out of Syria and abandon the Kurds.

We need strong, effective intelligence agencies. Trump has attacked them incessantly and tried to weaken them, but it was information gleaned by the CIA about al-Baghdadi's whereabouts that set in motion the planning for the raid.

Trump should not have kept House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in the dark about the raid. The idea that she

would have leaked that information is absurd. She was on the House Intelligence Committee for years, has no record of divulging classified material and is second in the line of presidential succession. If Trump excluded her and other Democratic leaders because of the impeachment inquiry, it's another unfortunate example of politics infecting national security.

Our Middle East policy is still unclear. While the raid succeeded, pulling out from Syria earlier this month forced the Pentagon to speed up the attack before the military's ability to control spies on the ground and reconnaissance in the air was compromised. And Trump decided to leave some troops in Syria, after the blowback from his own party on the pullout, to protect oil fields there. That's a good goal; ISIS funded itself with oil exports from wells it seized. But Trump also suggested that the United States would take some of the oil. That's illegal. Language is important; it feeds perceptions the world has of our nation. The president must be more careful.