

Opinion

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OUR VIEW

Don't hide public spending

The sports betting contractor with the Oregon lottery is insisting Oregonians can't know what and how the state is paying them.

Can that company be serious? Yes, it is.

The company, SBTech, based in Malta, is suing to keep the financial details of its contract with the state lottery a secret. It claims releasing the information would be a release of trade secrets, pricing systems and do the company irreparable harm, as The Oregonian has reported.

But it deals with the spending of public money. Companies don't get the right to conceal how public money is spent from the public. Release the full contract.

The state did release some details of the contract already. The details of how SBTech was being compensated were blacked out at the company's request. Since then, Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum directed the state to release the entire contract. SBTech responded with a lawsuit suing pretty much everyone involved — Rosenblum, The Oregonian, the lottery and the lottery's director Barry Pack.

Sports betting is big business. And now that Oregonians can do it through an app on their phones, there are going to be many questions. There's going to be concern about what the change means for problem gambling, for one. And the important thing here is that Oregonians need to know that the state is not being ripped off by the contract. The public can't know that unless the details are released.

Just imagine if SBTech wins. Every state contractor — every contractor with a government entity in Oregon — may start asking for the same deal in Oregon. They will want to keep their contracts with government secret, too. The state's budget would become a mystery and openness in government would be a charade. Oregonians have a right to know the details of how their money is being spent.

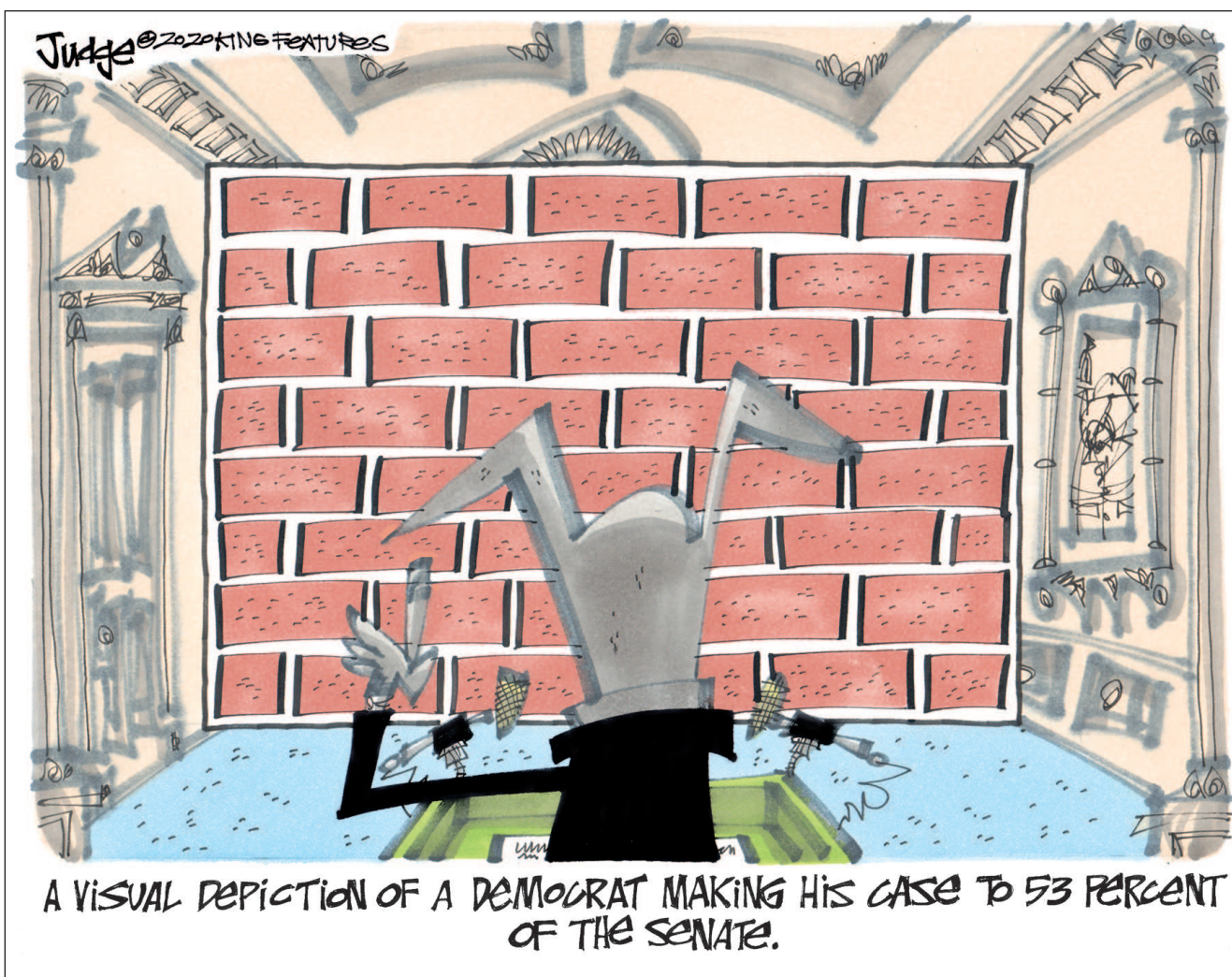
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Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the Baker City Herald. Columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the Baker City Herald.

Letters to the editor

- We welcome letters on any issue of public interest. Customer complaints about specific businesses will not be printed.
- The Baker City Herald will not knowingly print false or misleading claims. However, we cannot verify the accuracy of all statements in letters to the editor.
- Letters are limited to 350 words; longer letters will be edited for length. Writers are limited to one letter every 15 days.
- The writer must sign the letter and include an address and phone number (for verification only). Letters that do not include this information cannot be published.
- Letters will be edited for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons.

Mail: To the Editor, Baker City Herald,
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Email: news@bakercityherald.com



Answering your questions about our upcoming changes

After the announcement on New Year's Day about our decision to partner with the U.S. Postal Service for same-day mail delivery and convert our publishing days to Tuesday/Thursday/Saturday beginning Feb. 4, readers have flooded our phone lines and social media feed with questions and concerns. I thought it would be worthwhile to take a few minutes to answer some of your questions.

Q. Will papers be delivered to post office boxes?

They will be delivered to post office boxes. Essentially, beginning Feb. 4, you can expect to find your Baker City Herald wherever you normally receive your mail.

Q. Will there be a price increase?

There will be no increase in your subscription price. In fact, there's more value-added benefits to being a subscriber than ever before. Baker City Herald and Observer subscribers have full access to our website content and 24/7 availability of a convenient online e-edition subscription in addition to their print edition. In the coming weeks, we also will launch our free mobile news app for your Android or Apple phone or device, allowing you to access the latest news and headlines on the go.

Q. What should I do with my old newspaper box?

The Observer and the Baker City Herald won't be picking up newspaper boxes, so how you'd like to handle disposing of it is entirely up to you.

Q. Will this plan work?

I can assure you, it will. Conversion of newspaper delivery services from carrier to mail isn't a new concept in our industry. The Postal Service delivers newspapers nationwide.

Q. How will holidays affect newspaper delivery?

There are eight postal holidays remaining in 2020. But five of those fall on Mondays and one on a Wednesday, days that going forward will not affect delivery. Two holidays, then, will



KARRINE BROGOITTI

affect delivery: Independence Day on Saturday, July 4, and Thanksgiving on Thursday, Nov. 26.

Even so, we will provide breaking news and other updates on digital products.

Q. Will I still get my paper in a timely manner?

I would expect that you would see improvements in the timeliness of your delivery and that our partnership with the post office will provide a more consistent delivery time.

Q. How is this "same day mail" when Monday's paper is going to be delivered on Tuesday?

This has been a question that's popped up frequently during the last few weeks. Your newspaper is going to be produced and delivered on the same day. You won't be receiving Monday's newspaper delivered with Tuesday's mail — it really will be Tuesday's newspaper delivered on Tuesday. The publication day swap gives us the opportunity to provide grocery ads on Tuesdays (one day before sales begin) and some Friday high school sports scores in your Saturday newspaper. It also eliminates having to deal with federal holidays (that typically fall on Mondays) — days on which the post office doesn't deliver. This schedule also allows for more breaking news opportunities.

Q. What day will the grocery ads be in the paper? TV Guide? GO! Magazine?

Your grocery ads will be available in your Tuesday paper. Look for Go Magazine in your Thursday paper and our TV Guide on Saturdays.

Q. When will single copy be available?

For those of you who prefer to pick up a paper via rack or from one of our local dealers, you can expect to see The Observer and the Baker City Herald available by 9 a.m. each publishing

day — the perfect complement to your morning latte or Danish (or chicken-fried steak, if you love breakfast as much as I do).

Q. Who do I call if I don't get my paper? The Baker City Herald or the post office?

If you have any issues with your delivery or have billing questions, those will still be directed to the office staff at the Baker City Herald. Place a call and ask for circulation — they'll be happy to help.

Q. I get my mail at a post office box and check mail only a few times a week. What other options do I have for getting my news the same day?

As I addressed earlier, your newspaper subscription offers far more than just the print edition three days a week. Print subscriptions come with access to the online edition, full unlimited access to our website and a convenient, on-the-go mobile news app (coming soon). If you aren't taking full advantage of what your subscription to The Observer and the Baker City Herald have to offer, call our office today and let us help you access these value-added perks.

Q. If I am out of town for a while, will the post office save my papers along with my other mail? Do I request this at the post office or at the Baker City Herald?

If you're planning to be away for an extended period of time, you'll want to contact the post office to have your mail held — they'll hold your newspaper, too, and then deliver when you return. Or, if you'd prefer to put a hold on your newspaper subscription and resume service when you return, you'll contact our office.

As we move closer to transition day, you might have more questions. Reach out and let us know — we're happy to answer them or address any concerns. My door is always open.

Karrine Brogotti is the publisher of the Baker City Herald and the La Grande Observer.

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.

U.S. Rep. Greg Walden (2nd District): D.C. office: 2182 Rayburn Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20515, 202-225-6730; fax 202-225-5774. La Grande office: 1211 Washington Ave., La Grande, OR

97850; 541-624-2400, fax, 541-624-2402; walden.house.gov.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown: 254 State Capitol, Salem, OR 97310; 503-378-3111; www.governor.oregon.gov.

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.

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, Larry Morrison and Doni Bruland.

Baker City administration: 541-523-6541. Fred Warner Jr.,

city manager; Ray Duman, 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; Greg Baxter, 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 Wittly. 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.