

## EDITORIAL

## Another mystery bill in Salem

Another day. Another mystery bill in the Legislature.

The latest example comes in a report by Gary Warner of the Oregon Capital Bureau. It's a proposal in House Bill 4143 to change the laws of the state of Oregon without clear information in the bill about who proposed the change.

The bill concentrates more power in the governor's office and takes it away from voters. The governor would get the power to make the appointment to fill a vacant seat of a United States Senator. The person would have to be of the same party as the person who left office.

But as the law stands now in Oregon, there is a requirement for an election. The voters get to choose. This bill hands the power to the governor to fill the rest of the term.

Should Oregon voters choose who represents them for one of the most powerful positions in the country or should the governor pick? The person the governor picks may not be there long and would have to seek election. There also can be problems with the delay of several months between a vacancy being announced and an election. Almost all other states don't do it the Oregon way and use appointments.

The bill is a committee bill, one of those mystery bills that we have written about that does not clearly identify who is behind it. In this case, state Rep. Barbara Smith Warner, D-Portland, said it came to the House Rules Committee as a request from a source she didn't identify.

After the publication of reporter Warner's story, the North Star Civic Foundation said it suggested the idea. The group sincerely stands for data-driven, non-partisan solutions and things like pragmatism, racial equity, joy and trust. And apparently it also values a kind of expediency of a governor appointment over the messiness of an election and voter choice. Do you agree?

*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.*

## COLUMN

## Hero to fan: Savoring the Bulldog-Badger rivalry

Reece Dixon walked across the nearly empty parking lot at the Baker High School gymnasium.

The hero, like a character in a novel, was alone as he strode across the blacktop to his car.

Dixon, the senior point guard for the Powder Valley Badgers, avoided the patches of ice and crusty snow outside the gym as deftly as he had navigated the Baker Bulldog defense inside the building earlier on the evening of Saturday, Feb. 5.

He was wearing a short-sleeved shirt despite the 15-degree early February chill.

No coat. Apparently Dixon is as impervious to an Eastern Oregon winter as he is to pressure on the basketball court.

I happened to be leaving the gym just after Dixon.

And as I watched him walk, it struck me that this brief scene, so different from what had just happened inside, where it was bright and warm and the bleachers were packed with rowdy fans, better captured the essence of small town high school basketball than that evocative, but also clichéd, tableau.

Barely half an hour earlier, Dixon made the game-winning 3-point shot with about 4 seconds left on the clock.

It was the sort of shot that almost every basketball player at some point imagines pulling off. Think of a kid in a driveway or barnyard, shooting at a hoop bolted to a pole or above the garage door, daydreaming about the elation that would come with watching the ball slip crisply through the nylon net, and seeing the numbers on the scoreboard reflect the sudden, exhilarating shift from defeat to victory.

Dixon had just lived what is, for most players, forever a fantasy.

And yet here he was, while the adrenaline must still have been coursing through his system, getting ready to drive home.

No postgame press conferences.

No gantlet of autograph seekers.

(Although I wouldn't be surprised if a few Badgers asked Dixon to scrawl his name on a handy scrap of paper.)

Probably the same typical Saturday night awaited the other Bulldogs and Badgers who, along with Dixon, had just given several hundred fans such a thrilling evening of entertainment and spirited competition.

I thought of Dixon's teammate Kaden Krieger, who scored 30 points — half of them in the first quarter alone as the Badgers made it clear that they weren't intimidated by Baker's 15-3 record.



Jayson Jacoby

Cole Martin scored all seven of his points in the crucial fourth quarter. Kaiden Dalke had 13 points.

There were heroic plays aplenty among the Bulldogs, too, of course.

Isaiah Jones contorted himself in a way that would leave me aching for a week en route to a one-handed layin — his off hand, the left, no less — that gave Baker what seemed, briefly, to be a decisive 63-57 lead midway through the fourth quarter.

Hudson Spike somehow spun the ball with the perfect velocity to kiss it off the backboard and into the hoop on a reverse layin.

And he tossed the inbounds pass to Paul Hobson, who eluded all five Badgers to get into the key for a layin, and then made a pressure-packed free throw with 14.1 seconds left to give Baker the 2-point lead that Dixon would erase not long after.

Surely it was one of the more exciting games played in the Baker gym in decades.

Yet the stakes were not the ones most often associated with the kind

of nailbiting finish that Powder Valley's 69-68 win produced.

This wasn't a state tournament or playoff game. The winner wasn't going to be awarded a shiny trophy.

Indeed, Baker and Powder Valley likely won't ever compete against each other for those accolades or the associated hardware.

Baker is a Class 4A school, a classification with an enrollment range from 350 to 664.

Powder Valley is a member of Class 1A, reserved for Oregon's smallest high schools, with an enrollment below 90.

Class 1A schools rarely compete against Class 4A schools.

But the rivalry between the Bulldogs and the Badgers, if not a traditional one, is certainly enticing in a geographic and cultural sense.

The schools, after all, are just 20 miles apart. And many of the players, and students, know each other.

The match up isn't feasible in every sport.

In football, most notably, as Baker plays the standard 11-man format while Powder Valley puts eight players on the field.

Yet as Powder coach Kyle Dixon told me after the Feb. 5 game, on the basketball court this has turned into a compelling rivalry.

I hope it continues as an annual event — ideally with the teams, both boys and girls, playing both in Baker and in North Powder.

I doubt, though, that this will ever become the antagonistic sort of rivalry that we tend to associate with sports — Ducks vs. Beavers, Red Sox vs. Yankees.

Here's why: Three nights after Dixon's epic 3-pointer, he was back in the Baker gym.

But he wasn't in uniform. He wasn't even wearing the Badgers' blue and red.

Dixon was in fact clad in the purple and gold of Baker High.

He was standing in the BHS student section, not 15 feet from where he let go of the game-winner that they'll be talking about in North Powder for years.

He had a purple pom pom in one hand.

Dixon, the conqueror of Bulldogs, standing among them, rooting them on against La Grande.

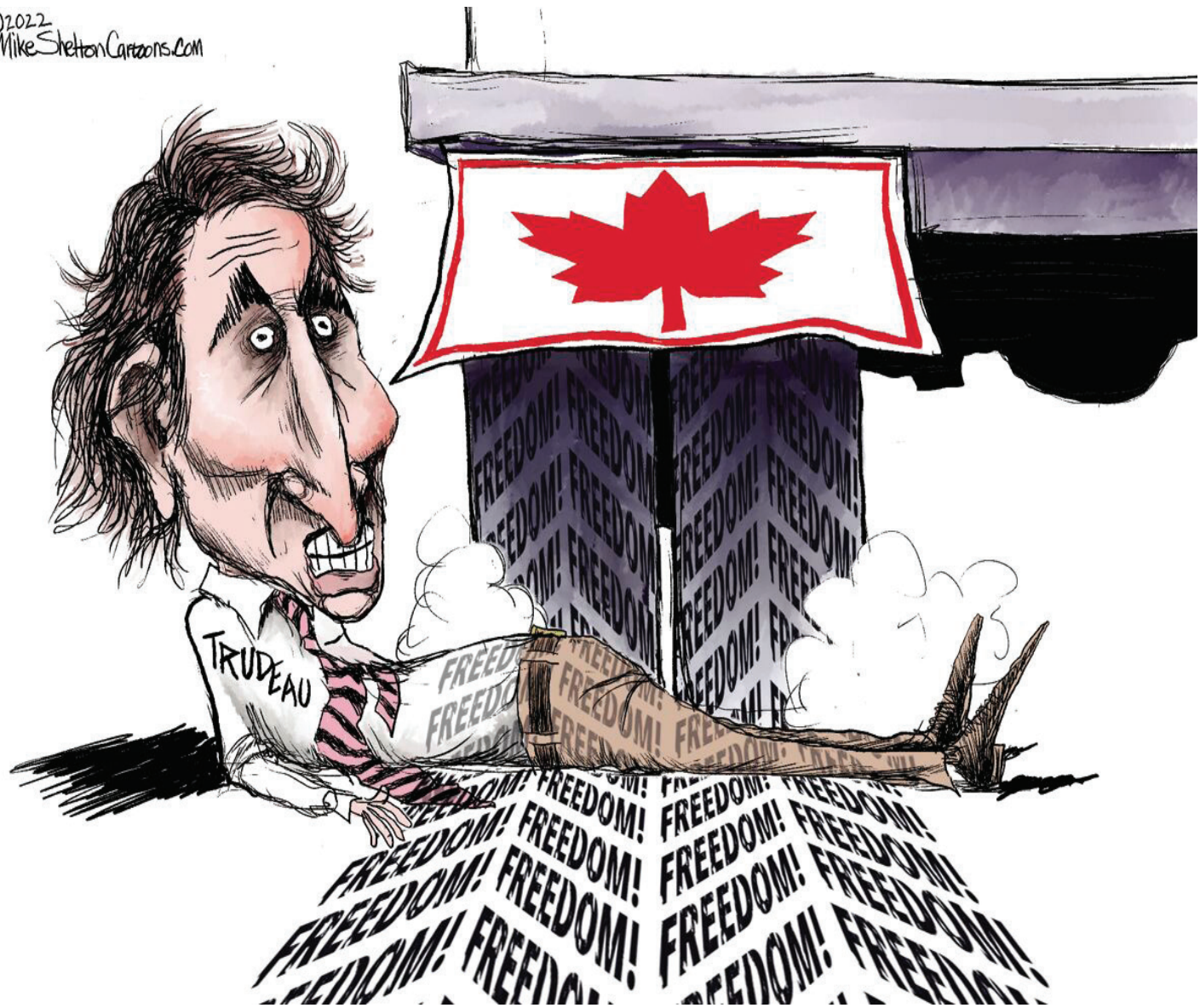
Not as memorable, perhaps, as a 3-pointer with the game on the line.

But it was quite a scene just the same.

*Kevin Roberts is the president of The Heritage Foundation (heritage.org).*

*Jayson Jacoby is editor of the Baker City Herald.*

©2022  
Mike Shelton Cartoons.com



## OTHER VIEWS

## Time to win the war against Big Tech

BY KEVIN ROBERTS

Big Tech is an enemy of the American people.

The largest corporations of our information economy wield unparalleled power over Americans' lives. They enjoy almost unfettered access to our personal information. And they exercise more immediate control over our speech and livelihoods than even the government itself.

They've had years to prove themselves responsible stewards of this power, by using it transparently and equitably, in the public interest and for the common good. They've chosen not to.

Internationally, Big Tech has partnered with the Chinese Communist Party, helping Beijing's genocidal regime develop surveillance technologies to oppress its own people and military technologies that threaten ours. Domestically, they have colluded with government agencies and left-wing activists to silence conservative voices, de-platform conservative ideas or frankly any idea that challenges the opinions of our elites, and manipulate political discourse to undermine conservative candidates and causes.

These corporations, many valued at more than \$1 trillion, have grown orders-of-magnitude more powerful and dangerous than anyone could ever dream of.

At this advanced stage, Big Tech barely tries to hide or justify its bullying abuses or totalitarian impulses. It is long past time for policymakers to protect the American people from both.

As The Heritage Foundation's groundbreaking new report, "Combating Big Tech's Totalitarianism," makes clear, the tipping point in Big Tech's evolution from potential danger to the republic to the clear-and-present one it now represents was when it collectively embraced the bigoted, bellicose progressivism now ascen-

dant on the elite left. This recent merger of Big Tech and woke ideology has motivated the long train of abuses that now call us to action.

There is Twitter and Facebook's selective enforcement of "standards" that has censored Republican members of Congress at a rate of 53-to-1 compared to Democrats, and suspended Trump supporters 21 times as often as Clinton supporters.

There is the routine, partisan deplatforming of "disinformation" that often boils down to differences of opinion.

There is the discrimination against conservative books and media: Amazon's ban on scholar Ryan T. Anderson's book on gender dysphoria, or its unexplained removal of a documentary about Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas from its Prime Video streaming service.

There is the collusion between Big Tech and government officials to strangle dissent, in line with White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki's chilling assertion that violators "shouldn't be banned from one platform and not others." Spotify, MailChimp, GoDaddy and GoFundMe have now joined their trillion-dollar industry leaders in discriminating against customers and entrepreneurs who insist on thinking for themselves. Just ask Joe Rogan.

This is not fair market competition. It is systematic, collusive market capture. And its perpetrators, remember, are engaged in high-tech, misogynistic child abuse on a global scale. It's no coincidence that as Big Tech's market capitalization has exploded in the smart-phone era, so has teen depression, with girls' rates double those of boys. It's the same reason tech CEOs severely restrict their own kids' screen time.

Given the stakes, and the enemy's resources, we must weigh every policy option. The time to act is now: We need to

win the war Big Tech launched against us many years ago.

Federal antitrust law must be enforced, not simply to regulate future mergers, but to correct the monopolistic abuses Big Tech firms already commit — including its ad tech model. Antitrust law must also be enforced and modernized to account for the damage firms can do even with nominally "free" services. And the American people will be better off if Big Tech executives are held personally liable for their companies' crimes.

Platforms that deliberately censor based on viewpoint alone should be stripped of their liability protection under Section 230, and the real impacts of these firms' vaunted algorithms should be transparent for consumers. Government should be strictly prohibited from leveraging Big Tech to silence dissent, and these corporations, which receive significant benefits as American businesses, should be prohibited from continuing its lucrative partnerships with Beijing's surveillance state and entities linked to the People's Liberation Army.

If these proposals sound aggressive, that's the idea. Americans have underestimated the threat these firms pose. They are not competing within a market; they have become the market and are increasingly assuming the additional role of government resting atop the market.

Their control, their leverage over our lives, politics, public discourse, their profiteering from children's mental anguish and China's Orwellian oppression, and their embrace of woke intolerance demand a vigorous and comprehensive constitutional response.

It is time to take Big Tech on, and as necessary, take them down.