

EDITORIAL

Climate rules will affect how we live

The Legislature was likely to have been Gov. Kate Brown's best friend. It was controlled by her fellow Democrats.

But it wasn't on climate legislation. Republicans walked out to block what she and many of her fellow Democrats had in mind. Brown responded with an executive order. And this week, key climate rules for transportation and growth are expected to be adopted by the state.

They are powerful changes to how Oregonians live and get from place to place. Some of them build on trends that are already in state rules. Some of it is new. If you like the proposal or don't, now may be your last chance to comment on them.

The proposal changes how cities over 10,000 can grow. They must plan for what are called climate friendly zones to accommodate at least 30% of their housing needs. What does that really mean? It means more dense development. More growing up than out.

You aren't going to be yanked out of your car. But there is a big shift coming in prioritization away from passenger cars. Transportation will be required to be more oriented toward pedestrians, bikes and transit. It will be harder to find a place to park and easier to find a charger for an electric vehicle. Local streets will be narrow and slow. New city plans for transportation will have to have the goal of reducing car trips.

If you like to bike, the rules may make things better for you. The bicycle system will have to satisfy most travel needs under 3 miles. There are more requirements for bicycle parking. Will there be wide, protected bike lanes enabling bicyclists to get where they need to go without having to worry about getting whacked by a car and bike lanes that will be cleared of snow? The rules don't seem to go that far.

Another important priority is to ensure growth or transportation plans are done equitably. Plans have to be reviewed through an equity lens. The question is if the more intense development may spur gentrification, despite any equity review.

Will these proposed rules lead to a more climate friendly Oregon? It would seem so.

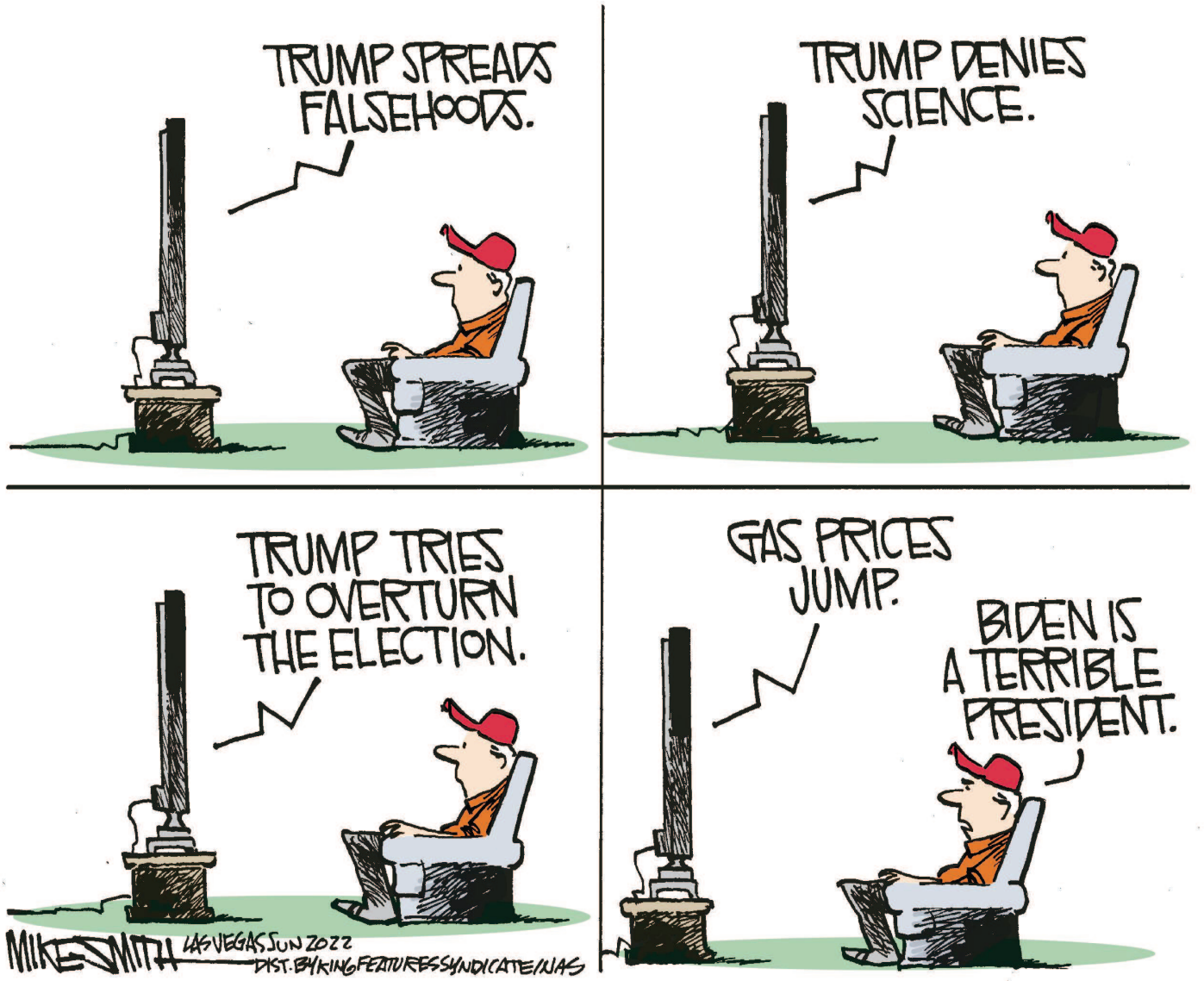
Will it make housing more affordable? That's difficult to answer. Supporters would say yes in the long run because the rules are aimed at being climate friendly.

Will it make more housing of the kinds Oregonians want available? Homebuilders are concerned it will not create the housing mix people look for and will put more pressure on prices for single-family homes.

Will cities get enough financial support from the state to easily transition to all the new requirements? We will see.

There's more information here, tinyurl.com/DLCDagendas, about the agenda for the meeting. And the state has tried to simplify the explanation of the rules here, tinyurl.com/Oregonclimatefriendly. More information about how to comment is here: tinyurl.com/DLCDcomment.

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COLUMN

GOP can extend inflation advantage

BY RAMESH PONNURU

Inflation is likely to be the most powerful issue working for Republicans in this year's congressional elections. Public concern over it has been rising fast. Republicans can plausibly blame the administration of President Joe Biden for making the problem worse by spending too much money on a pandemic stimulus program he pushed through Congress last year, and for not taking it seriously as it emerged.

But there isn't much that Congress can do to affect the course of inflation in the short term. The Federal Reserve is in charge of monetary policy. Congress can (in principle!) pass legislation to make the economy more productive, but any changes would generally take awhile to have an effect.

That's only a small political inconvenience for Republicans. Voters are more likely to want to register their anger over inflation than pore over any candidate's plans to address it. (Elections are a blunt instrument for public control of the government.)

There are also ways that Republicans can contribute to bringing inflation down. If they did, they could both perform a useful service for the country and increase their political advantage on the issue, at least a little.

The first is simply to support monetary tightening. A large portion of recent inflation has been caused by excessive spending throughout the US economy. During the expansion prior to the arrival of COVID-19 two years ago, spending had grown by a bit less than 4% a year. Over the past year it has risen more than 10%.

Even after the Federal Reserve's mid-March hike in interest rates, spending has been rising fast enough to keep the gap growing

between actual spending levels and the pre-COVID trend. By that measure, the Fed has not yet, in effect, tightened at all.

It should be encouraged to tighten money both by raising interest rates further and, maybe more important, by announcing that its goal is to bring spending levels back to the trajectory they were on before the burst of inflation.

Central bankers are sure to face pressure to ease off, especially if tightening leads to higher unemployment. Republicans should exert countervailing pressure, pointing out that getting inflation under control is the only way to achieve sustainable high employment. The Fed has made the eventual tightening more painful by delaying it, and should not delay further. Republicans could also explore legislation to make the stabilization of spending a statutory goal of the Federal Reserve, giving that goal more credibility.

And while no one should oversell how much or how fast policy changes can address inflation by expanding supply, some such changes are worth pursuing. Former President Donald Trump's tariffs on steel and aluminum never made much sense as either a national-security or job-protecting measure, and his tariffs on China have largely failed to achieve their objectives. Abandoning them would, as the Peterson Institute for International Economics puts it, "provide a temporary downward shock to prices." (It's worth noting, however, that lifting the tariffs on China would require mounting an argument to win over skeptics.)

Congress could also remove barriers to energy production — something Republicans are already calling for — and to the automa-

tion of ports. Senator Mike Lee, the Utah Republican, has a bill that applies deregulation to transportation-sector logjams, and another one to increase housing supply. These measures would probably make the economy a bit more productive even if inflation subsides. They would also provide a way for Congress to show that it is working to bring prices down.

Finally, Republicans should block proposals that would make inflation worse. Many economists think widespread student-debt relief would have this effect, and that the Democrats' "Build Back Better" spending legislation would as well.

Congress could also consider delaying the spending of some of the money it is devoting to infrastructure projects so that more of it happens after labor shortages and supply disruptions ease. That would produce more infrastructure improvement per dollar spent.

This is hardly an exhaustive list. The point is that when Republicans face the question, "What are you going to do about inflation?" they can offer many partial answers. Democrats would be wise to go along with some of these ideas, too, and even to propose them first. But some of them, such as the ones that involve taking on unions, are a more natural fit for Republicans.

All of these political considerations are meaningful, however, only on the margins. No matter what politicians in either party do, the cost of living is going to be front of mind for voters this fall. They're going to take out their frustrations on the party in power.

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OTHER VIEWS

Protesting at justices' homes self-defeating

Editorial from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch

The apparently pending Supreme Court opinion overturning Roe v. Wade is an affront to women's rights to biological self-determination and to all Americans' rights to privacy. This is why wide majorities of the country oppose the coming reversal of Roe. But if that support is to remain strong and eventually translate into abortion-protection legislation, pro-choice forces must quit sabotaging themselves by engaging in threatening protests at justices' homes — and the Biden administration must enforce federal law prohibiting such actions.

To be sure, the leaked draft of Justice Samuel Alito's opinion, joined by four other conservatives on the court, is infuriating. In language berating and dismissive of a right that has been a cherished and transformative one to more than half the U.S. population for almost half a century, Alito effectively struck down the entire premise of a right to privacy implicit in the Constitution. Were he right (he's not), other rights like access to contraception, same-sex marriage and even interracial marriage could also be on the chopping block.

Activists lately have staged protests outside the homes of Alito and other conservative justices. In response, Govs. Glenn Youngkin of Virginia and Larry Hogan of Maryland sent a letter this week to U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland demanding that he enforce a

federal law making it a crime to "picket" judges' residences "with the intent of influencing" their decisions.

The protesters argue that law doesn't apply in this case because their intent is to express their fury, not to influence the upcoming decision. Even if that's true, they miss a broader point. The potential loss of Roe is a huge issue that should be debated as an issue, not as a personal attack on individuals. What they're doing is comparable to anti-choice demonstrators intimidating women as they enter abortion clinics.

The key to keeping some legislative or other form of abortion rights in place is to convince the broad middle. Polls indicate moderates strongly favor keeping some level of abortion rights in force. If pro-choice activists want to keep that tentative majority alliance in place, the last thing they should do is present themselves as radicals who shout slogans at judges' families in their homes in response to rulings they don't like.

Yes, as one protester told The Washington Post, there is something galling about the premise that "the Supreme Court wants to have domain over women's uteruses and yet the sidewalk in front of their homes is somehow sacred ground." It may not be sacred ground, but it is outside the legitimate parameters of debate and protest. For the sake of both political propriety and strategic effectiveness, those activists should keep to the Supreme Court steps.

YOUR VIEWS

Taxpayers shouldn't pay for ranchers' losses to wolves

Recent coverage on the wolf/cattle situation in Willowa County omitted significant facts.

It failed to mention that taxpayers compensate ranchers for confirmed and probable losses at full fall market value, and for confirmed and probable injuries.

It failed to mention that taxpayers pay ranchers for extra work in protecting their stock. This year some ranchers will be paid directly to do their own range-riding, but taxpayers also pay for hired range-riders. Last year one rancher received \$11,713 from taxpayers for extra work and was the primary beneficiary of \$5,000 paid by a conservation group for range-riders. Oregonians also pony up for non-lethal tools and equipment, including ATVs.

Oregon wolves are not a non-native species and were not introduced to Oregon. They came on their own from Idaho and are the same species as those exterminated in Oregon.

There's an ethical side to the wolf issue. Thousands of wolves were shot, trapped, poisoned, strangled, and bludgeoned by livestock producers and their agents until extinct in Oregon. This savagery lasted 100 years and continues today. The landscape was denuded of an apex predator and cattle proliferated at great cost to the environment. The cattle are bred for weight and lack horns and the physical agility for defense against predators. They are wolf bait. Especially on public land, common breeds should be replaced by horned, agile cattle such as Corrientes, a successful commercial breed. Putting wolf bait out on public land and then killing wolves for eating it is a crime.

Wolves are due thousands of cows (and sheep) in compensation for the thousands of slaughtered wolves. In expiation of their sin, livestock producers should themselves bear the cost of compensation. The Oregon and national cattlemen's associations should collect funds from their own members for their own compensation fund. Taxpayers should not be responsible.

Wally Sykes
Joseph