

EDITORIAL

River Democracy Act and private property

It means a lot when a river gets the federal designation of “wild and scenic.” Stirring views will be protected. Water quality gets armor around it. People can savor that the waterway will be preserved. Wildlife gets a better chance to thrive.

The River Democracy Act would add 4,700 more miles of wild and scenic waterways to Oregon. Oregon Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, both Democrats, have led the legislation.

The act has inescapable appeal. But there are also questions about what it will mean for property owners in the designated area and adjacent land.

The concise answer: The federal agencies that administer wild and scenic rivers have stated in the past

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— Hank Stern, Sen. Wyden’s spokesperson

that the government may take action to protect river values. But there is also clear language in the River Democracy Act that should allay many fears.

Now we’ll go through a detailed answer. Feel free to skip to the bottom if you don’t want to wade through details.

How does the federal government regulate wild

and scenic waterways? We found some good answers in two places on the rivers.gov website — a document prepared by federal managers of wild and scenic rivers and a search tool.

The document says the wild and scenic act “neither gives nor implies government control of private lands within the river corridor” and that “management restrictions would apply only to federal lands. ... The federal government has no power to regulate or zone private lands under the Act; however, administering agencies may highlight the need for amendment to local zoning...”

So what happens when the federal government believes the uses of private land are incompatible with a wild and scenic river?

“Should some proposed or actual use clearly threaten the values the river was designated to protect, the river managing agency would work with a landowner to explore ways to avert the threat through local zoning, state provisions, land exchanges, or purchases on a willing-seller/willing-buyer basis. Condemnation would be a last resort, would only be feasible if funding were available, and is prohibited on some wild and scenic rivers by their enabling legislation,” the search tool says.

Since condemnation was mentioned, here is a relevant section of the River Democracy Act ... “may not acquire any private land or interest in private land within the detailed boundaries of a covered segment without the consent of the owner.”

The River Democracy Act also explicitly states that nothing in the act affects private property rights, which may help some landowners relax. Wyden’s office helped clarify what that means.

“The language is intended to ensure that the designation of any new segments doesn’t affect private property rights whether the landowner lives within the boundaries of the segment or outside of it,” Hank Stern, Wyden’s spokesperson, told us.

Wyden and Merkley have written the River Democracy Act to add more protection to Oregon waterways and to protect private property rights.

But yes, of course, the federal government would take action if it believes river values are threatened.

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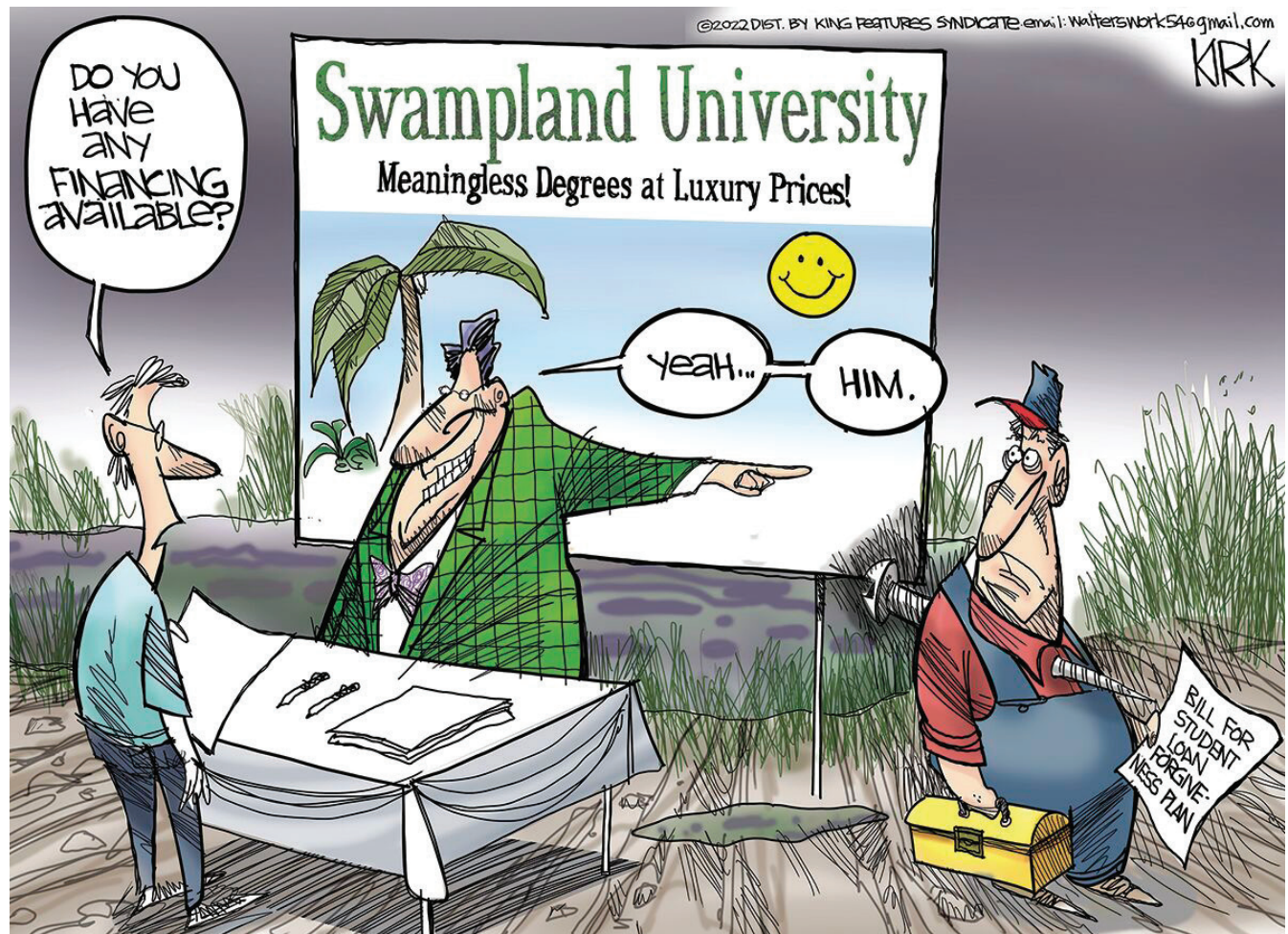
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YOUR VIEWS

Americans need to stand united for freedom

Paul Harvey was an icon of reasoned thinking of whom many young Americans are unaware. He passed on in 2009 and since then, our country has fallen to the depths of which he warned.

In Paul Harvey’s words, the playbook is simple and the outcome is obvious if America fails to respond to the ideological/sycophantic liars who wage war within our country against the God-given Republic that we have been so blessed to receive from the thoughts of this nation’s founders.

The Socialists of today are neither creative nor brilliant. They simply know how to plagiarize or use historical ideas in a way that is the opposite of the original good intentions of true American patriots. Being contrary and divisive is their continuous narrative/mantra.

Years ago while in high school there was an individual in my class who was just downright smart in an educational sense. (Likable, athletic, the whole package.) Just one problem though! He needed attention. To get it, he became a divisive renegade who acted contrary to rules, authority, and even became a thief in his craving for notoriety.

All this led to a life of self-misery, loss of true friends, failed marriages, and eventually prison time. He has and is paying the price for his actions.

To me this exemplifies the actions of Socialists but with one large exception. They expect others to pay or suffer from their actions and then constantly refuse to accept responsibility for the social negatives of their ideas or policies.

Paul Harvey was and is correct. The Devil is real and he is at our country’s door. Do we open the door wider? Or, do we block the door with our foot before it is pushed open any further by those whose

intent is the complete denigration of America?

This is the time to stand as a united, freedom-based society in firm opposition to the divisive, destructive intentions of those seeking power and control over our God-given rights. We Americans expect a future of national peace which is inclusive of the freedoms that ensure common respect of others and the ability to live in harmony with one another.

May His countenance be upon us here in Oregon and throughout America.

Danny L. Johnson
Halfway

COLUMN

California dreamin’: Ban on gas, diesel cars would be a gift to China

BY DERRICK MORGAN

California is at it again. This time, the state Air Resources Board has issued a regulation banning the sale of new gasoline- or diesel-powered cars in just 12 years. Golden State motorists would find their options limited to cars propelled by electricity or hydrogen fuel cells.

California can do this only if President Joe Biden grants Sacramento a waiver from the Clean Air Act, allowing the state to impose even stricter mileage standards and auto emissions requirements than those imposed by the federal Department of Transportation.

It’s a huge mistake. Not only does the new regulation bar reasonable choices in the nation’s largest car market, it also makes us more dependent on China. And a similar requirement could be coming to a state near you. The New York Times reports that, if California’s law takes effect, another dozen states could adopt similar policies this year.

The state’s drive to outlaw the internal combustion engine is fueled by its concern about global warming. But this ignores the fact that, even if they eliminated all carbon emissions in the entire country — from every source: industrial, transportation and agriculture — average global temperatures would fall, at most, by less

than .2 degrees Celsius ... by the end of this century!

Fecklessness aside, government bureaucrats have no business telling you what car you can or cannot buy. While some people want and can afford EVs, they just will not work for everyone. Despite recent improvements, they still lack the range and convenience of conventional vehicles. A test by AAA revealed that driving in 20 degree weather with the heater on reduces an EV’s range by about 40%.

And that’s when the vehicle is fully charged. But manufacturers recommend supercharging up to only 80-90% capacity (and not going below 20%) to battle battery degradation.

Given EVs’ limited range and their need for frequent recharging, road trips can be disastrous. Car & Driver notes, “unlike a gas-powered vehicle, an EV’s consumption increases dramatically as speeds rise.... Unlike gas- or diesel-powered vehicles, which regularly beat their EPA ratings in our high-way testing, only three of the 33 EVs that we’ve run range tests on to date have exceeded their EPA highway and combined figures.”

Range is particularly important because fueling up an EV is not a five-minute stop at a ubiquitous gas station.

At best, it takes 30 minutes

to get a decent charge with “don’t use it too often” supercharging. Non-supercharging takes hours.

The Wall Street Journal’s Rachel Wolfe wrote about her four-day road trip in an EV. It took her three hours at one charger to get 30 miles of range. She concluded the article talking about filing up her own car and inhaling at the gas station, remarking that “[f]umes never smelled so sweet.” At least she still has a choice of what car she wants, unlike future Californians.

Towing with an EV is even more hopeless. Car and Driver tested the new electric Ford F-150 Lightning pickup. It could only go 100 miles towing a trailer. MotorTrend couldn’t make it even that far.

California is not content to stop at light-duty vehicles, either. Those who haul goods or people, cut lawns or show houses will be disproportionately impacted. (California has also indicated it wants to eliminate gas-powered lawn equipment, further sticking it to landscapers.) Others impacted by eliminating liquid fuels in favor of electricity? The more than 11 million people who work in jobs supported by the oil and gas industry and America’s farmers who make the raw material for biofuels. Without the vehicle-fuel market, farm income would

decrease by \$27 billion according to a study by the Ag Retailers of America.

Putting all our eggs into the EV basket would also dramatically increase our reliance on China — the same country that is building three times more coal plants than the rest of the world combined, according to the Center for Research on Energy and Clean Air.

While the United States was very recently a net exporter of petroleum and has the largest oil refining industry in the world, nearly everything we need for EVs goes through China.

The International Energy Agency, which supports lowering emissions, has noted that China refines 35% of the nickel, 40% of copper, 50 to 70% of lithium and cobalt, and 90% for rare earth elements.

Graphite is produced exclusively in China.

Do we really want to put all our transportation eggs in a basket made in China?

Biden should deny California’s waiver. If he doesn’t, then more thoughtful leaders in Congress should block the waiver legislatively, thereby preserving consumer choice for California motorists and keeping America from becoming even more dependent on Chinese goods.

■ Derrick Morgan is the executive vice president of The Heritage Foundation.

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Oregon Legislature: Legislative documents and information are available online at www.leg.state.or.us.

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in Council Chambers. Councilors Jason Spriet, Kerry McQuisten, Shane Alderson, Joanna Dixon, Kenyon Damschen, Johnny Waggoner Sr. and Dean Guyer.

Baker City administration: 541-523-6541. Jonathan Cannon, city manager; Ty Duby, police chief; Sean Lee, 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; Noodle Perkins, roadmaster; Greg Baxter, district attorney; Alice Durrflinger, 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 Witty. Board meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. Council Chambers, Baker City Hall, 1655 First St.; Chris Hawkins, Andrew Bryan, Travis Cook, Jessica Dougherty, Julie Huntington.