

DEAR ABBY

Write to Dear Abby online at dearabby.com or by mail at P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069



Dear Abby: I recently moved from the U.S. to Germany. It has been a big change, and I honestly don't know how to handle it. A lot of the kids at school make fun of me and call me names. My family plans to stay here another two years. My parents say that when/if we move back to the United States, we won't return to our hometown. I find this very hard to accept because it was the only home I've known. I tried asking them if I could live with a friend there, but they always brush me off. I don't want my family to worry about me since my mom is working hard going back to college, but keeping my feelings bottled up inside seems like the wrong choice. Should I tell them honestly how I feel or keep crying into my pillow every night?

—Lost and Depressed

Dear Lost: Crying in your pillow every night isn't productive. You should tell your parents everything you are experiencing — that you are being bullied at school and made to feel you don't fit in, and that you miss your old hometown terribly. They might want to consult with the school administrator about it. Geographical distance does not mean you must lose

relationships forever. While moving back to the town you left may not be practical, you can keep in touch with your friends online and may eventually be able to visit them.

Dear Abby: A beautiful flower arrangement was delivered to me at my home today. While on the phone, I told my friend about the gift and mentioned that my two cats wouldn't leave it alone. She said, "I hope there aren't any lilies in it!" There were, Abby — white oriental lilies. I Googled it and discovered they are poisonous to cats, although not to other animals. When I called the florist, they claimed not to know. Thought your readers should!

—Loves My Felines

Dear Loves: I agree. And thank you for sharing that information. I learned from my own Google search that lilies are not the only flowers that are poisonous for pets. Azaleas, daffodils, amaryllis, chrysanthemums, tulips, oleander, hyacinth, English ivy, sago palm, cyclamen, autumn crocus, widow's thrill, hydrangea, aloe vera, caladium, pothos, philodendron, lily of the valley, castor bean, poinsettia, asparagus fern, peace lily and corn plants can be lethal, as well. Kitty lovers, be warned!

Vaccine

Continued from A5

While J&J is seeking FDA authorization for its single-dose version, the company is also studying whether a second dose boosts protection. Panel member Dr. Paul Offit warned that launching a two-dose version of the vaccine down the road might cause problems. "You can see where that would be confusing to people thinking, 'Maybe I didn't get what I needed,'" said Offit,

a vaccine expert at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. "It's a messaging challenge." J&J representatives said they chose to begin with the single shot because the World Health Organization and other experts agreed it would be a faster, more effective tool in an emergency. Cases and hospitalizations have fallen dramatically since their January peak that followed the winter holidays. But public health officials warned that those gains may be stalling as more variants take root in the U.S.

"We may be done with the virus, but clearly the virus is not done with us," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky, said, speaking at the White House on Friday. She noted that new COVID-19 cases have increased over the past few days. While it's too early to tell if the trend will last, Walensky said adding a third vaccine "will help protect more people faster." More vaccines are in the pipeline. On Sunday, a CDC panel

is expected to meet to recommend how to best prioritize use of the J&J vaccine. Other parts of the world already are facing which-is-best challenges. Italy's main teachers' union recently protested when the government decided to reserve Pfizer and Moderna shots for the elderly and designate AstraZeneca's vaccine for younger, at-risk workers. AstraZeneca's vaccine was deemed to be about 70% effective in testing. Canada became the latest country Friday to allow use of AstraZeneca's vaccine.

Labor

Continued from A5

If employees could file civil lawsuits for violations of workplace protection rules, it would create a "positive feedback loop" that frees up state agency resources, raises revenues through fines and reduces violations, Smith-Warner said. Workers in the agriculture, manufacturing and retail sectors are particularly vulnerable to abuses and would greatly benefit from HB 2205, she said. "We need enforcement tools that promote deterrence," said Terri Gerstein, a senior fellow at the Economic Policy Institute, a think tank focused on policies affecting low- and middle-income workers. The bill is an "elegant solution" that's similar to the federal False Claims Act, which has allowed whistleblowers to sue for abuses of government programs since the Civil War, Gerstein said. "They root out fraud; they deter violations; they bring in money for the government. The same would happen here," she said. An amended version of HB 2205 would reduce the scope of the legislation to clarify that it only applies to the state's Bureau of Labor and Industries



Capital Press file

A worker dumps cherries from his picking bucket into a bin. Employees could pursue lawsuits to enforce Oregon labor regulations under a bill being considered by lawmakers.

and Occupational Safety and Health Administration, said Kate Suisman, attorney for the Northwest Workers' Justice Project. Several business organizations testified against HB 2205, arguing the legislation would undermine the state's existing system of labor law enforcement. State authorities have other tools besides penalties to bring companies into compliance, such as mandatory training and random spot checks, said Paloma Sparks, vice president of government relations with

the Oregon Business & Industry Association. A similar law in California has led to a situation where penalties are the "only real tool," with employees reaping minimal rewards, she said. "Where does that money go? To attorneys. The only real beneficiaries of that system are the attorneys." The state's court system is already under strain, and HB 2205 would only add to that burden, said Tim Bernasek, an attorney representing the Oregon Farm Bureau. The bill contains unfair pro-

visions, such as the right of aggrieved parties to remain anonymous, which would hinder legal discovery and prevent companies from developing an adequate defense, Bernasek said. Workers who bring lawsuits that are not in good faith would face no consequences, he said. Only plaintiffs can recover attorney fees under the bill, while defendants cannot. Under the current system, state agencies can pursue meaningful settlement opportunities during the investigatory and administrative process, which keeps cases out of court, Bernasek said. "The bill undermines the state agency enforcement actions. The investigators and the state agencies are the experts in their areas. Trial lawyers are not," he said. The bill appears to be a solution in search of a problem and will increase costs for companies that must defend themselves against allegations of violations, said Tyler Ernst, policy counsel with the Oregon Forest & Industries Council. "This is a seismic change to the state's regulatory landscape and the effect would be unbelievably destabilizing to those entities that exist within these regulatory systems," he said.

YOUR HOROSCOPE By Madalyn Aslan

Stars show the kind of day you'll have

★★★★★ DYNAMIC | ★★★★★ POSITIVE | ★★★★★ AVERAGE | ★★★★★ SO-SO | ★★★★★ DIFFICULT

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR SATURDAY, FEB. 27, 2021: Magnetic, insightful and worldly, you're approaching your most ambitious year. You become more realistic and capably guide a success to great heights. This year you should feel proud of yourself. If single, love can be tumultuous, and it might be healthiest to spend part of this year alone. If attached, you're known for many marriages, but this year is your most romantic yet. LIBRA worships you.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) ★★★★★ Today affects your health sector. A dream or intuitive perception brings insight into fitness factors. Seek ways to ease a stressful daily schedule. A much loved animal companion might require extra love and attention. Tonight: Eliminate clutter and begin spring cleaning early.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) ★★★★★ Today gives you renewed energy and enthusiasm. You'll enjoy sports, creative projects and hobbies. Love and admiration come your way. Children have much to share. Young people are sources of inspiration, pride and hope. Tonight: A relationship becomes more supportive.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) ★★★★★ Today generates mood swings in a loved one. Offer words of encouragement. Be a good listener. A visitor offers to help with chores or repairs. A household gathering is peppered with lively discussions. Tonight: Ideas and stories that family shares will inspire you.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) ★★★★★ Today indicates that you might look for a new vehicle or consider alternative travel and transportation arrangements. Mobility issues will be resolved satisfactorily. Hesitate if an acquaintance suggests a risky proposal. Tonight: If something just doesn't feel right to you, back off.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) ★★★★★ Double-check suggestions others make regarding finances. Today's opposition could allow the actions taken by another to drain your resources. Trust your own judgment, particularly if something sounds too good to be true. Tonight: Deep disappointment in a loved one.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) ★★★★★ Today generates enthusiasm and motivation. Control impatience and anger though. It is especially important to be constructive in your focus. Both love prospects and finances are very promising. A desirable relationship grows. Tonight: Extra hours of sleep to catch up.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) ★★★★★ Old and poignant memories surface. Past life regression might be useful to aid in understanding and accepting the present situation. A deep rapport with wild creatures and the spirit of wilderness prevails. Tonight: Talk deeply with a mentor from your past.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) ★★★★★ Friends include you in their plans. The expectations of others draw you into group activities or a prominent role within an organization. You might assume the role of mediator or overseer. Tonight: A light illuminates the future of an important relationship.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) ★★★★★ Today puts a positive spin on your status and career situation. You'll be highly visible. A Zoom meeting goes especially well. Others express admiration and see you as a role model. Burn sage to cleanse your workplace. Tonight: Excitement builds about your future: constructive daydreaming.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) ★★★★★ Today reveals new potentials on the horizon. Your luck is changing for the better. Select goals for the long-range future. Write a wish list. Information and new ideas are directed your way. Opportunities are likely to come about. Tonight: The world is your oyster.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) ★★★★★ Today will be memorable. Be receptive to growth and change. Don't be surprised by the magnitude of changes brewing. There can be a debate or some points of controversy to settle. Tonight: A partner needs convincing.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) ★★★★★ Listen carefully and honor others' freedom of thought, even if you disagree. A long-standing partnership — in business or in love — might be ending or a new one beginning. Your imagination and creativity are excellent. Tonight: An original idea solves a problem — and it's profitable.

Shoppers

Continued from A5

The transition online hasn't always been easy, and children and senior living staff often have to help, an experience that can be both gratifying and difficult. Barbara Moran, director of social programs for Atria Senior Living where Mont lives, says one of the biggest challenges residents face with their devices is that they are used to pushing, not tapping, as if they're using a touch-tone telephone. She has to repeat tips often. "I would lie if I didn't say I was frustrated sometimes," said Moran, who sits with Mont — masked and gloved — in the facility's dining room for weekly shopping sessions. Internet retailers and delivery services hope people over 65 keep up the online shopping habit. Freshly, which delivers prepared meals, is looking at adding smaller portions and low-sodium options aimed at seniors; grocery delivery service Instacart set up a phone support line; Target's delivery service, Shipt, is scrapping its \$99-a-year fee for some low-income seniors. Diane Shein, 73, from Bonita Springs, Florida, turned to Instacart and Amazon-owned Whole Foods for groceries because of the pandemic. "I'm not sure how much it costs, but I don't care," Shein said. "It's very easy and safe." Instacart president Nilam Ganenthiran predicted that online groceries will be a "new normal" for older people even when the pandemic ends. Still, there are many barriers, from struggling to use new technology to high prices to access. People 65 and older are less likely than younger people to have home internet or a smartphone. Nearly 22 million, or 42% of Americans 65 and older, lack broadband at home, according to a 2021 study from nonprofit Older Adults Technology Services. Low-income and Black and Latino older adults are more likely to be left out, the study says. "We are asking them to stay at home, and yet a lot of seniors are not connected," said Lauren Cotter of the Community Tech Network, a San Francisco nonprofit that trains

low-income residents on technology and provides free tablets and hot spots. Those with devices and internet may wrestle with how to use an app or fear giving out personal information because they worry about fraudsters. Online shopping scams cost Americans \$245.9 million last year, according to the Federal Trade Commission. And online grocery shopping, which includes tips and delivery charges, costs more than going to stores. The pandemic has also exposed the shortcomings of the internet, which often fails to accommodate people with disabilities or an aging population with visual and hearing issues. Then there's the simple fact that older people did not grow up with the internet so things may not come as intuitively compared with those who have. Lynnette White, 72, buys clothes and household items from Amazon and Target online on her iPhone. But she finds other apps, including the Safeway grocery one, too hard to navigate. When she tries to check out her shopping cart, she finds herself starting all

because the tax credit costs the state \$5.5 million per biennium that could be invested in more valuable projects and services. The bovine manure tax credit was originally included in a broader tax credit for biomass energy created in 2007, but it was renewed as a stand-alone tax credit in 2017, said Kyle Easton, an economist with the Legislative Revenue Office. In recent years, most of the financial benefit from the tax credit has gone to four companies, he said. "There is a concen-



Jeff Chiu/AP

over again. She says it's frustrating that there are too many steps. Still, she said she likes learning new skills and her grandchildren, who she sends Amazon gift cards as presents, approve. "They're very impressed that at my age, I am excited about technology," White said.

Tax credit

Continued from A5

At best, such digesters only capture the added methane generated by the development of factory farm systems, Van Saun said. CAFOs should be required to trap their emissions if they choose to raise animals in this manner, rather than be paid for it by the public, said Amy Wong, policy director of the Friends of Family Farmers nonprofit.

Natural gas from factory farms is not "truly clean energy," and the state government should instead encourage pasture-based farming and technologies such as wind and solar electricity, Wong said. "Oregon should not use public dollars to support large, private corporations at a time Oregon is facing a budget shortfall," she said. The Oregon Center for Public Policy, which advocates for "inclusive economic policies" for workers, also opposes SB 151

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tration in a few of the entities that are receiving this credit." Knowing that such a tax credit will continue to exist can help digester investments "pencil out" financially for companies that may not otherwise be able to afford them, he said. Economic studies have indicated size is an important consideration in investing in digester technology, Easton said. "The larger the herd, the more financial sense it makes for the farm to have an on-farm digester."

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