

Bill could end many sweeps of homeless camps

The rule for Bend parks is: No person shall camp or sleep overnight on district property.

So where should the homeless go? There aren't enough places in homeless shelters. Should they violate the rule and sleep in a park? Go to county land? Land near the Bend Parkway? Private property? Federal land?

Ideally the city, the county, the state and nonprofits would be able to offer the homeless better alternatives. A place to stay. Resources to help them find what they might need — permanent housing, medical help, addiction treatment and more.

A bill working through the Legislature, House Bill 2367, is what is called a "right to rest" law. It could end the practice of sweeps of homeless camps in many places.

Briefly, the bill proposes to:

- Grant homeless people a right to privacy for their property even if that property is located in a public space.
- Allow homeless people to "rest in public spaces and seek protection from adverse weather conditions" as long as they don't block human or vehicle traffic. That would not apply if an area was not

open to the general public or required a fee for entry.

- Allow homeless people to stay in a motor vehicle or recreational vehicle provided it is legally parked on public property or private property with the landowner's permission.
- And it would be unlawful in Oregon to restrict these rights.

The bill has some strong support from homeless advocates and others. It also apparently has some strong opposition from some cities, though we couldn't find any testimony officially submitted from cities. The Oregon Recreation and Park Association did submit a video, which is certainly not in favor of the bill.

Passage of this bill may drive communities to do more to help the homeless so parks, sidewalks and other public places don't become permanent camping places. And that should be the true goal. Is this the right way to do that? Is it just the right thing to do? Tell your legislators what you think. The bill is also scheduled for a public hearing on April 13.

Historical editorials: Elections of U.S. senators

Editor's note: These historical editorials originally appeared in what was then called *The Bend Bulletin* on April 13, 1906.

A large majority of the people of the United States favor the election of the United States senators by a direct vote of the people and they propose to effectuate that desire in spite of constitutional forms. A powerful element in the constitutional convention of 1789 frankly distrusted the capacity of the common people to participate in the government of the country.... Many of the states including Oregon, have embodied in their election laws provisions for balloting for United States senator at general elections and every candidate for election to the state legislature must state whether or not he will be bound by the choice of a majority of this party of United States senator. When it becomes apparent that the people mean to insist upon an honest compliance with this requirement and will visit their displeasure upon any legislator who fails to carry out his pledge, a much needed reform in the legislative branch of the federal government will have been attained.

...

The state printing office is a very expensive office to the people of Oregon. Only one candidate for state printer, Will S. Dunway, pledges himself to reduce the cost of the office. He is a man of good personal character, with a reputation for

business integrity, and his friends have no doubt that he will make good his pledges of retrenchment in the most expensive office in the state.

...

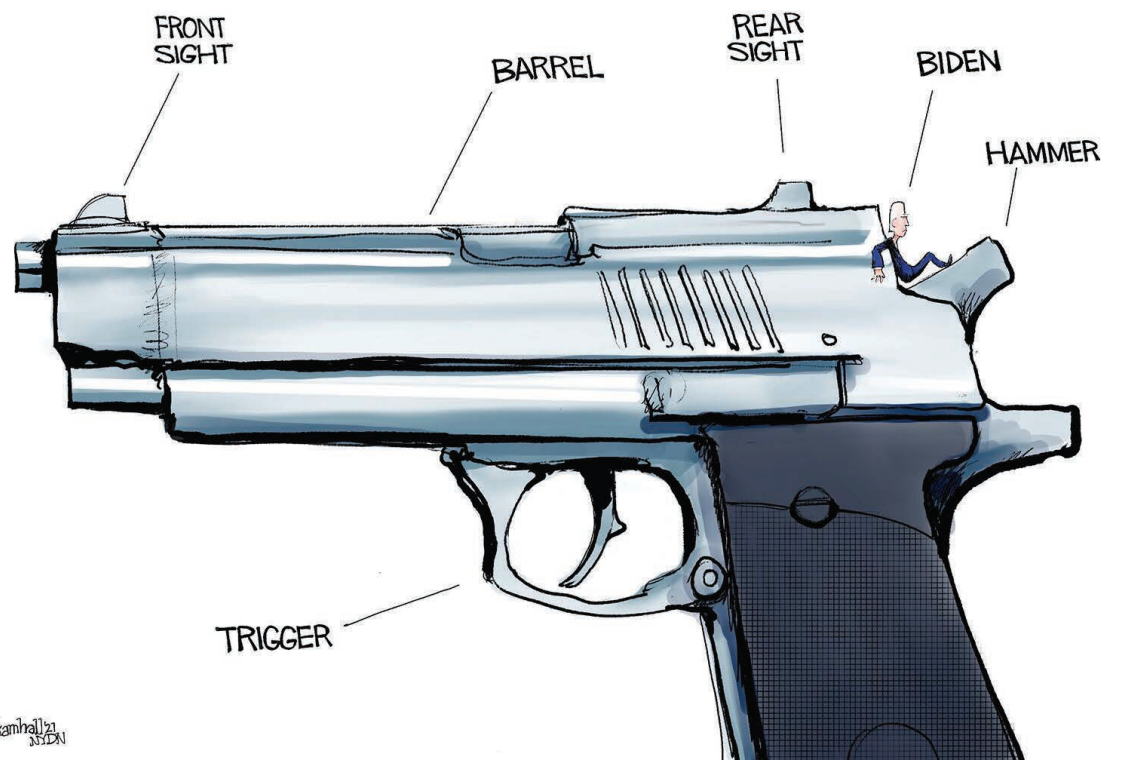
The Wasco News has some very nice things to say about H.M. Cake, the Republican candidate for United States senator. That he is very popular in Eastern Oregon will appear from the following:

"H.M. Cake, who is one of the aspirants for a seat in the United States senate is a man fully competent to represent the state. Mr. Cake has long been identified with all movements looking to the general welfare of the state, and especially has he been active in movements looking to the opening of the Columbia River. He is generally well known as a man who enters all his work in a wholehearted way that usually accomplishes something."

Mr. Cake is also very popular along the coast, according to the following in the Tillamook Headlight of March 29th.

"The Headlight can conscientiously recommend Mr. Cake as a gentleman who will fill the oath of office of United State senator with credit and those who vote for him will be satisfied that they vote for a clean man and whenever it becomes his duty to look after the interests of Tillamook he will do it successfully, for he is just the man the country and people need."

Editorials reflect the views of The Bulletin's editorial board, Publisher Heidi Wright, Editor Gerry O'Brien and Editorial Page Editor Richard Coe. They are written by Richard Coe.



My Nickel's Worth

Boost renewable energy

Oregon communities, especially environmental justice communities (BIPOC, rural & coastal and low-income Oregonians) need opportunities. Clean energy projects create good jobs and local economic and resiliency benefits.

House Bill 2021, as amended, would create good, well-paying, local jobs in the renewable energy sectors that incentivize local projects that are good for communities and reduce pollution by achieving 100% clean energy as soon as possible.

HB 2021 would require that Oregon be powered by 100% clean electricity as soon as possible (no later than 2040).

100% Clean Energy for All means: all of Oregon's electricity generated using renewable or emissions-free resources; good jobs that hire local Oregonians, pay prevailing wage and provide apprenticeship opportunities; and community-based projects that increase independence, energy affordability and disaster resiliency.

HB 2021 is rooted in the idea that our electricity system should support opportunities such as living-wage jobs, workforce equity and energy resilience while also minimizing burdens to environmental justice communities. Each utility will convene a Community Benefits and Impacts Advisory Group to guide this work.

This bill is a must for Oregon to reduce our carbon emissions

so that we can minimize the effect of climate change. Please call or write state Reps. Jason Kropf or Jack Zika to encourage them to pass HB 2021.

— Craig Mackie, *Camp Sherman*

Lopez for Redmond schools

A vote for Keri Lopez for Redmond School District position #4 will ensure that our children will have the opportunity to receive the best education possible.

Keri wants our students back in the classroom five days a week for education, as well as developing social skills with activities like sports, drama and music. Keri will fight to have diversity and inclusion in our schools.

As a college student in Central Oregon, Keri was instrumental in securing the funding for the Oregon State University-Cascades campus in Bend. She testified at the Oregon Legislature with former state Rep. Ben Westlund to gain funding for the college. She was part of the first graduating class from the Oregon State University-Cascades campus in 2003.

As her grandmother, I am very proud to endorse Keri Lopez for the Redmond School Board.

— Jo Anne Sutherland is former Redmond city manager

Improve recycling in southern Deschutes County

People have home-based recycling just about everywhere else in Deschutes County. It is time to bring south Deschutes County

out of the Dark Ages! A proposal is being considered to divert excess fees into a fancy new public recycling center in Sunriver. Those fees are collected from the garbage service customers and should be used to subsidize home-based recycling. Unmonitored public centers, like Sunriver's, allow for indiscriminate dumping, while home-based recycling promotes a cleaner and more marketable stream. The proposed new facility will just move the problems to a new location. When a bin of contaminated recycling leaves the center, does it go to a landfill? Filling up our landfills is not good for any of us, and not what we intended when we make the effort to recycle properly.

If you live in south Deschutes County, now is the time to advocate for the adoption of home-based recycling. The fancy new public center proposed to benefit Sunriver could become the most expensive recycling center in the state, and the most inconvenient for those that live outside of Sunriver.

Take the time to contact your hauler and your county commissioners and let them know you want your excess garbage fees to be spent wisely. Let them know you want home-based recycling that is sensible and more convenient.

It is time to make the change before the Sunriver special deal is done!

— Mark McConnell, *Sunriver*

Letters policy

We welcome your letters. Letters should be limited to one issue, contain no more than 250 words and include the writer's signature, phone number and address for verification. We edit letters for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We reject poetry, personal attacks, form letters, letters submitted elsewhere and those appropriate for other sections of The Bulletin. Writers are limited to one letter or guest column every 30 days.

Guest columns

Your submissions should be between 550 and 650 words; they must be signed; and they must include the writer's phone number and address for verification. We edit submissions for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We reject those submitted elsewhere. Locally submitted columns alternate with national columnists and commentaries. Writers are limited to one letter or guest column every 30 days.

How to submit

Please address your submission to either My Nickel's Worth or Guest Column and mail, fax or email it to The Bulletin. Email submissions are preferred.

Email: letters@bendbulletin.com

Write: My Nickel's Worth/Guest Column

P.O. Box 6020
Bend, OR 97708

Fax: 541-385-5804

U.S. is past due to reduce costs and provide health care for all

BY RICH BELZER

One month ago, I wrote about three areas in which the U.S. needed to catch up with the rest of the world's wealthy nations: health care, education and child care for workers. Of these, the most urgent and obvious area requiring immediate attention is health care. Why? Because we spend twice as much money as a percent of GDP than the other countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and get worse results. In addition, they all cover every citizen while, as of 2019, 28.9 million Americans were uninsured.

Our results? The U.S. ranks 40th in the world in life expectancy at birth, 78.5, while Japan ranks first at 84.3.

The U.S. ranks 37th in the world in life expectancy at age 60, 83.1, while Japan ranks first at 86.3.

The U.S. ranks 47th in the world in infant mortality — 6.5 per 1,000 live

births — behind all of Western Europe and Japan. Even Russia is better at 5.8 per 1,000 live births.

I could go on, but you probably get the message at this point. This country spends extravagantly on health care as a percent of our GDP, produces poor results and does not insure everyone. In fact, according to a 2019 study by the American Journal of Public Health, 66.5% of personal bankruptcies in the U.S. are due to medical issues. Spending more and producing low-quality results is not a winning formula. The U.S. health care system can only be described as the worst of all worlds. Can anyone look at these facts and disagree?

There are two questions we should probably be asking ourselves: 1) How did we let it get this horrible? and 2) Why aren't our representatives and senators falling all over themselves to fix it? If I can get the above information, we know that they can as well.

GUEST COLUMN



Belzer

our capitalist system. The free market works well when competition restrains prices. For example, if Chevy priced their Silverado \$20,000 higher than a comparable Ford F-150, they would have a hard time selling their trucks. In health care, however, competition is minimal and prices are not readily available, so cost-control is virtually nonexistent. Imagine that you are at home in Portland and are hit with an incredibly painful appendicitis attack. Your wife helpfully calls

the EMTs but, in the meantime, might you be out on the web trying to find the hospital with the lowest prices? Is this information even decipherable?

From a Republican perspective, our health care system is working exactly as intended in that it is creating wealth; we have the highest paid doctors in the world and our health care companies, up and down the food chain, are highly profitable. As an example, I have included a slide on physician salaries from a class on the U.S. health care system taught by a friend of mine at Carnegie Mellon University. To Republicans, the fact that we spend more than other countries, produce miserable results and leave 30 million Americans uninsured is irrelevant compared to industry profitability.

There has been an attempt at a fix. The Affordable Care Act was passed and signed into law by former President Barack Obama in March 2010. The ACA fell significantly short of

being a total solution, but it did solve the problem of those who, through a job change, could not obtain affordable insurance due to a preexisting condition. Through its additional funding of Medicaid and availability of insurance through health insurance exchanges, coverage was expanded by roughly 20 million people. Unfortunately, it did very little to address the cost of either services or pharmaceuticals.

The U.S. health care system is obviously broken; the statistics don't lie. What should voters say to any congressman or senator who isn't working toward a solution that reduces costs and provides healthcare for all? "You're fired!"

Rich Belzer served as director of federal marketing for a NYSE-listed computer company and was subsequently a senior executive with two NASDAQ-listed high-tech companies. He moved to Bend to join Columbia Aircraft where he became VP of worldwide sales.