

Save a restaurant, a job and an artist

Your favorite restaurant or bar was likely already struggling to survive during the pandemic. On Friday, it could get hit again.

Gov. Kate Brown is scheduled to announce Tuesday whether or not she will shut down indoor dining in Crook and Deschutes counties and other counties across the state as COVID infections climb.

Restaurants and bars aren't the only businesses that may feel the restrictions. Gyms and movie theaters would, too. They are all in a battle to survive.

Who can make a difference? You. Visit them this week. Order take-out or delivery. And if the shutdown order hits, keep ordering. Stay away and a business that has survived this long may go away. Don't let that happen.

Their precarious financial position is not their fault. Yes, some businesses flouted the rules about distancing and masks. Most did not. Most made every effort to comply.

If you are frustrated or just plain tired of the pandemic rules, join the club. Tell Gov. Brown. Don't take it out on local businesses.

The city of Bend stepped in to help businesses by allowing some to expand their operations outdoors and into parking spaces. Can't you step up, too?

It's not only about protecting the businesses. It's about their employees. They need jobs. They are working in an industry that has many of them in contact with people and likely at greater risk.

We'd like to put in a plug as well for The Bulletin's joint effort with Scalehouse, a collaborative for the arts. They are trying to raise donations to help Central Oregon's creative artists. Musicians, performers, artists and more have the pandemic warp their careers and incomes. The effort is about halfway to its goal of \$40,000. The money will be distributed as grants to local artists. More information is available here: tinyurl.com/CentralOregoncares. Could you donate to help them out? Make a donation. Save an artist. Order takeout. Save a job.



My Nickel's Worth

Olson for Bend schools

My name is Shirley Olson, and I am a candidate for the Bend-La Pine School Board, Zone 4, representing south Deschutes County. I am an Oregon native and a full-time resident in Sunriver for 13 years — my grandson is a senior at Summit and my granddaughter is a seventh grader at Pilot Butte.

I have stayed active in the local area. I am a supporter of Sunriver Nature Center, Sunriver Library, La Pine Senior Activity Center, a Board Member of Sunriver Women's Club, and a SMART Reader volunteer at Rosland Elementary School in La Pine. I serve on the Bend-La Pine Schools Budget Committee.

As our county continues to grow, challenges are still present in our schools. I believe that EVERY student deserves equity and excellence in their education. We need students back in the classroom with teachers and staff confident that they are safe. We need continued funding to bridge the gaps that this last year has highlighted, like loss of learning, poverty and anxiety, and lack of adequate food and shelter. Schools have always been a safe environment for kids — providing learning, food, health services and whatever else a student might need. Let's keep our schools that way!

After my total career devoted to serving schools, students, teachers, and families I decided to run for the board. I understand the role of a board member and am prepared to fill that role with integrity, represent-

ing south Deschutes County.

Thank you for your consideration. More information is available at www.shirley4schools.com.

— Shirley Olson, Sunriver

Bentz should focus on substance on immigration

I note that Rep. Bentz is issuing a critical survey to his constituents. "Should the fencing around the US Capitol be removed and redirected to the Southern Border?" Gee, this political posturing seems like such a productive use of his time. His solutions to the problems that face his constituents run from abandoning his post at the Oregon Legislature to putting up a fence that won't ever keep people out once and for all.

Should this increase our confidence in representative democracy? Heaven forbid, our representative might do the hard work of drawing up comprehensive immigration legislation that would recognize what is taking place in our world — both inside and outside our borders. Facing reality on the ground is a lot harder than spouting political rhetoric. Get a move on, Congressman.

— Robert Currie, Bend

Concerns about Bend parking

I am very concerned about the proposed ordinance to allow permanent parking space use for outdoor dining. My primary concerns include:

1) This is public right of way, which according to ORS 368.002(6) is in-

tended for "ingress to or egress from property by means of vehicles or other means or that provides travel between places by means of vehicles..." It does not include dining.

2) Why are restaurants receiving priority treatment over other commercial activities in an area that has already demonstrated a critical lack of parking? Restaurants already have the ability to provide dining on city sidewalks.

3) The city has paid for multiple parking studies. Those studies have estimated that it costs at least \$10,000 to replace a single parking space. How will the city find additional parking to offset the loss of parking?;

4) The current "temporary" system has been abused by some restaurants. For example, at least one restaurant provides evening dining five days a week, yet takes up at least 4 parking spaces and also holds two additional spaces for "pick-up" orders only. These spaces are unavailable for other commercial activities

I find this to be very poor public policy, which favors a few at the expense of others.

The city should table this ordinance until a very equitable survey can be conducted with input from all commercial interests in the downtown core and seek public and consumer feedback. The proposed ordinance should not return on City Council agenda until the council is able to hold in-person council meetings again so the public can actually participate.

— Patricia Stell, Bend

Commission can't make a difference without you

Bend's new Human Rights and Equity Commission meets officially for the first time Wednesday.

If the commission is going to matter, if it's going to make a difference, if it's going to come up with recommendations that reflect the community to improve city goals and policies, it needs the community to get involved.

This first meeting is, well, probably not going to be terribly exciting. It's more about setting up the rules for how the committee will operate. City staff also must ensure the people appointed to the commission understand Oregon's laws about open meetings and open records. First things, first.

But there could be beginnings of discussions about what issues or priorities the commission will or should take on to improve diversity, equity

and inclusion.

The commission was established to advise the Bend City Council on an action plan and provide input to the city on goals and policies. It's also supposed to work with other groups and individuals. And it is going to be a place where people who can go to find resolution and assistance for complaints regarding discrimination. The commission does not have the authority "to compel participation, require specific actions, or impose economic sanctions or other penalties."

What are some issues that the commission should take on and what should it prioritize? The commission can make lots of recommendations. To create any real change would take a community effort.

More information about the commission is available at tinyurl.com/BendHREC.

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.

Preserving intellectual property barriers to vaccines is morally wrong

BY JOSEPH STIGLITZ AND LORI WALLACH

Special to The Washington Post

New COVID-19 variants are spreading quickly. An outbreak anywhere could lead to a more deadly or infectious strain hopping around the globe.

So why, after three months of making great progress on domestic vaccination, has President Joe Biden not ended a self-defeating policy from the Trump administration that hinders a global initiative to increase access to covid-19 vaccines and treatments? More than 100 countries support a temporary waiver of some World Trade Organization rules that guarantee pharmaceutical firms monopoly control over how much medicine is produced, yet the United States remains opposed.

Had WTO members agreed to waive aspects of its agreement on trade-related intellectual property for COVID-related medicines when some countries proposed it last October, poor nations might not wait until 2024 for vaccines, as projected.

Waiving intellectual property rights so developing countries could produce more vaccines would make a big difference in reaching global herd immunity. Otherwise, the pandemic

will rage largely unmitigated among a significant share of the world's population, resulting in increased deaths and a greater risk that a vaccine-resistant variant puts the world back on lockdown.

Pharmaceutical corporations claim the problem is not intellectual property barriers, but that companies in developing nations don't have the skill to manufacture covid-19 vaccines based on new technologies. This is self-serving and wrong.

Firms in the Global South are already making COVID-19 vaccines. For example, South Africa's Aspen Pharmacare has produced hundreds of millions of doses of Johnson & Johnson's vaccine, even though only a fraction of those went to South Africans. Other drug corporations simply refuse to work with qualified manufacturers in developing countries, effectively blocking more production.

These companies are focused not on global access but on sales in profitable markets. This underscores why the "third way" proposal from WTO Director General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, in which she promotes more of the same old, industry-controlled voluntary deals, is a distraction and not a remedy.

Not one vaccine originator has

shared technologies with poor countries through the World Health Organization's voluntary COVID-19 Technology Access Pool. The global Covax program, which aims to vaccinate 20% of developing countries' most vulnerable populations, has delivered about 38 million doses to 100 countries; meanwhile, the United States administers 3 million doses daily.

There is no way to beat COVID-19 without increasing vaccine production capacity. And some production must be in the Global South for a host of reasons, including that prompt suppression of new variants is how we avoid more deaths and quarantines.

A waiver would immediately increase government leverage over vaccine makers that refuse to license the technology. Firms could choose to either expand production by negotiating with governments, alternative suppliers and global initiatives, or risk governments circumventing them and forcing the transfer of technology.

A waiver would also provide legal certainty for governments and investors that are inclined to repurpose existing pharmaceutical manufacturing or build new facilities but are fearful of intellectual property liability. And it could boost production of COVID-19 treatments unavailable in much of the

world, as well as diagnostic tests and vaccine supply chain products.

The principle that all countries should have access to intellectual property related to medicines has already been accepted by the international community. In the early 2000s, as millions without access to treatments died of AIDS, WTO members clarified that countries have "flexibilities" to issue compulsory licenses for medicines. The United States itself threatened to do this for ciprofloxacin, a treatment for anthrax, during the 2001 scare. If there were ever a moment to invoke this principle, it is now.

Unfortunately, the drug companies have consistently done whatever they can to preserve their monopoly control. Even today, as they battle the waiver and argue that existing compulsory licensing rights are sufficient, they lobby the U.S. government to sanction countries that use that tool.

These corporations have also undermined this option by building "thickets" of intellectual property barriers. They fortify their monopolies by registering exclusive rights to industrial designs and undisclosed data, such as trade secrets and test data, in addition to numerous patents and copyrights for each medicine. Each element would require a license, and the

WTO's flexibilities might not even encompass all of them.

Making matters more difficult, "product-by-product" and "country-by-country" compulsory licensing is nigh impossible to coordinate across countries for medicines with complex global supply chains, such as covid-19 vaccines.

Even more absurd is the argument from pharmaceutical companies that temporarily waiving their monopolies for COVID-19 medicines would undermine their ability to respond to the next health crisis. Governments transferred more than \$110 billion to pharmaceutical firms to finance research and production, so companies face little risk while earning billions on vaccine sales. The market for COVID-19 vaccines is literally the entire world, so any successful vaccine maker stands to profit handsomely even with technology transfer.

Any delay in ensuring the greatest availability of vaccines and therapeutics is morally wrong and foolish — both in terms of public health and the economy. The waiver is a critical first step.

■ Joseph E. Stiglitz, co-recipient of the 2001 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics Sciences, teaches at Columbia University. Lori Wallach is the director of Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch.

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