

Governor's energy orders set unrealistic standards

Gov. Kate Brown issued two executive orders this month that she said would reduce greenhouse emissions while supporting Oregon's economy.

The environmental aspects were obvious. The economic ones? Not so much. The Governor's Office has yet to release any analysis of how her fiat would affect the economy, especially construction costs.

That should concern Oregonians. So too should the governor's decision to bypass the legislature in revising the state building code.

As head of the executive branch, Brown certainly was within her rights to expand purchases of electric vehicles for state use and to require increased energy efficiency when the state builds or remodels its government buildings. The legislature ultimately will decide whether to fund those decisions.

But in her 17 pages of executive orders, Brown also demanded changes to building regulations that affect all construction in Oregon, including requiring that new buildings be ready for installation of solar panels. That mandate would take effect in October 2020 for residences and October 2022 for commercial buildings.

By January 2020, high-efficiency water fixtures would be required in new buildings.

By October 2022, new commercial buildings would have to exceed International Green Construction Code requirements.

By October 2023, new residences would have to consume no more energy than they generate.

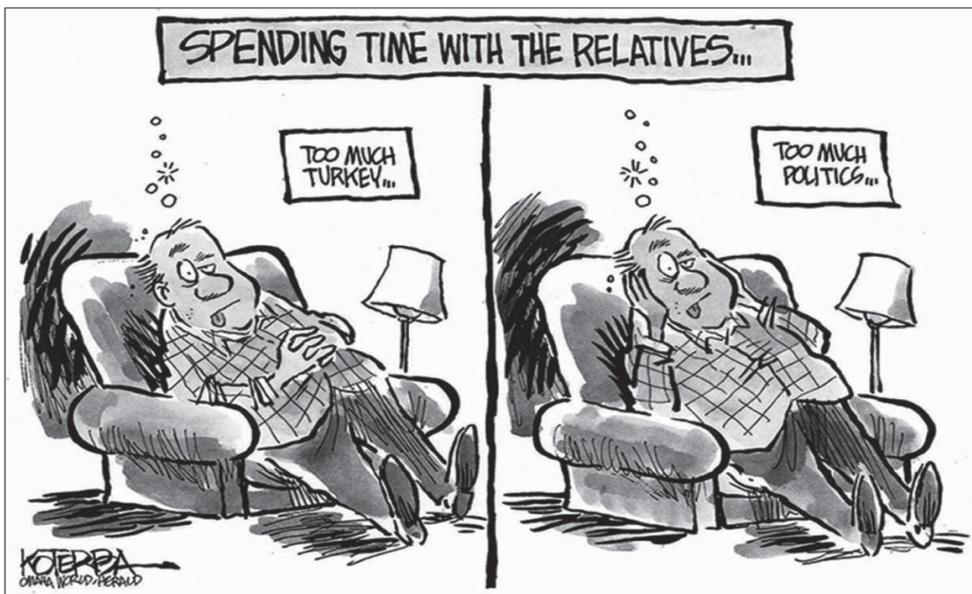
By October 2025, new commercial structures would have to safely reuse water for irrigation.

Those changes, and others, during the next two to eight years sound good in theory. Brown says Oregonians will save money on utility costs and — with the emphasis on electric vehicles — on fuel. There also are provisions that some requirements could be temporarily delayed if the costs are "significant," although that term is left undefined.

But in practicality, this seems like a classic case of putting the cart — in this case, an electric one — before the horse. Brown provided no evidence that her executive orders involved give-and-take discussions with the construction industry, private property owners and other Oregonians throughout the state.

If state government wants to place unfunded mandates on itself, that's one thing. But it's quite different to put those mandates on the private sector without first understanding the resulting financial and social costs.

Running a business, especially a small business, is tough enough in Oregon. So is getting a housing development to break ground in Eastern Oregon. Every government mandate increases both the cost and uncertainty of doing business.



GUEST COMMENT

We must save Medicaid from Gov. Brown's failed leadership

By Rep. Knute Buehler
To the Blue Mountain Eagle

As a doctor who has devoted my life to health and healing and as a lawmaker who supports Oregon's expanded Medicaid program, I am gravely concerned about the lack of leadership from Gov. Kate Brown that has created an atmosphere of chaos, corruption and incompetence around the management, funding and delivery of health care services that millions of Oregonians rely upon every day.

It was recently revealed that for three years the state government has overpaid \$74 million to 16 health care providers through the Medicaid program. That's \$74 million of your tax dollars. Almost as bad, state health care managers were aware of this problem for nearly a year and chose to conceal the overpayments from legislators and the public until now. What was the governor's response? She said she was out of the loop in the very government she allegedly leads. This is a deflection and dodge, not leadership or accountability.

When I learned of the overpayments, I quickly sent a letter to the governor demanding she do three things: 1) get Oregonians' money back — with interest, 2) appoint an independent investigator to find out how this happened and who should be accountable and 3) immediately release any and all documents, emails,

etc. from her office related to the millions of dollars in overpayments. At first, the governor refused to demand repayment. But after criticism came her way, she reversed course. I applaud Gov. Brown for joining me in demanding repayment of these tax dollars. Unfortunately, she still refuses to launch an investigation to find out the truth and she hasn't released any documents from her office on this subject. I hope the governor will change her mind and realize that finding the truth and fixing problems begins with transparency and trust.

Now that getting Oregonians' money back is a bipartisan goal shared by both the governor and me, I am requesting that the governor and my 89 colleagues in the House and Senate join me in supporting legislation to make it the law when we meet in Salem in February. House Speaker Tina Kotek and Senate President Peter Courtney have so far been silent on this scandal, but I hope they will be the first to sign on to the legislation — or propose their own bill. Given the unfortunate track record of waste and mismanagement in Medicaid going back to Cover Oregon, good intentions and nice words from state leaders are no longer sufficient. We need bipartisan leadership and the force of law to ensure accountability and to regain taxpayer trust.

Oregon has a proud tradition of innovative thinking and bipartisan

leadership in health care policy. Since the advent of the Oregon Health Plan in the 1980s, to expanding access to health care for low-income children, through the launch of coordinated care organizations and allowing the sale of over-the-counter birth control for women, Oregon has been a health care policy leader. Unfortunately, under Gov. Brown's watch, this legacy is in tatters. More important, the health of Oregonians who rely on health care services is at risk. Every dollar wasted on a failed computer system or overpayment to a provider is a dollar that can't be spent providing health care to Oregonians. That's the biggest scandal of all.

The health care safety net we provide Oregonians through Medicaid is vital. As governor, I will work to make health care more accessible and more affordable. That's my commitment to you. But first, we must save our Medicaid system from the failed leadership of Gov. Brown. We must ensure overpayments to providers are returned, we must investigate how this happened and why, we must make needed reforms to prevent future waste and we must recapture Oregon's commitment to bipartisan innovation in health care policy. Oregonians deserve better than the failing status quo.

Knute Buehler is a state representative and orthopedic surgeon from Bend. He is running for the Republican nomination for governor.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

America is being destroyed from within

To the Editor:

To the world, America was a beacon of light, giving hope, prosperity and freedom to all who came to the shores of this great nation.

Today, Americans watch our statues being removed in most of the Southern states. Some claim these people were slave owners and should not be seen by the public, yet most, if not all, were Christians.

History shows us that the Northern states had as many or more black slaves than the Southern states, and the Northern states were taxing the South 20 percent. Lincoln was going to add another 20 percent tax, which would have bankrupted the south.

Most people learned from our past by studying history, but this is a movement. It is not about slavery in America; it's about eliminating Christianity, and anything that resembles Christianity. Ignorance in our country is at its lowest level when it comes to American history. Our public schools used to teach civics; then they changed to teaching Social Studies some years ago.

If slavery was an issue, then the first slave owner in America was a white tobacco farmer named Anthony Johnson. North Carolina's largest slave holder in 1860 was a black plantation owner named William Ellison. American Indians owned thousands of black slaves, and in 1830 there were 3,775 free black people who owned 12,740 black slaves.

Where do you think the term "red neck" came from? It came from white slaves in America. Read the book "They Were White and They Were Slaves." If you think Lincoln was so great, read the book "The Real Lincoln," by Dilonenzo, and another book, "Lincoln's Marxists."

Communism started in 1848, and was an issue in the Civil War. Karl Marx supported Lincoln because he pushed for a centralized government, which enacted the nation's first personal income tax.

The Rev. Duane L. Wildie
Roseville

Tim White is a different candidate

To the Editor:

I'm writing in support of a different sort of candidate for Oregon's Second Congressional District — different because of his independence from party dogma and a real desire to see real benefit to the residents of our district. His name is Tim White, and if you examine his positions, you'll find that he doesn't conform to the "identity politics," which Steve Bannon rightly identified as the Democrats' vulnerability. Yes, he is in full support of ensuring the rights of all of us, whether we are of a racial minority, LGBTQ, female or male and especially those of us in the working middle class who have been left behind in times of economic boom.

More importantly, he believes we must stop the wave of undoing the progress our country has made on many fronts. Our health care system needs to be fixed, not discarded. Tim believes the ACA deficiencies can be fixed if our representatives would work together and stop the partisan bickering. Our Veterans Administration is in trouble, leaving our heroic military veterans in a sea of paperwork and bureaucratic delays. Tim believes we can do better by providing adequate funding for facilities and staff and by holding the VA management accountable. Remember the economic ditch we were in during 2007 and 2008? The GOP is now proposing to gut the protections put in place to prevent a recurrence of that mess — eliminate Dodd-Frank and the supervisory authority of the Consumer Protection Agency.

So, it's time for Greg Walden to retire. Can I honestly say Oregon's Second District is on a stronger economic footing than that of 18 years ago? Are our veterans being better served? Has Walden introduced any legislation of substance during his tenure? I believe the answer to each of these three questions is no. And I think we need someone who will truly represent us.

Take a look at Tim White. I think you'll find that he will more than measure up on both counts. Visit his

website at timwhiteoregoncd2.com for discussions on key issues and how you can support his candidacy.

Gerry Mueller
Bend

Rural community commitment inspiring

To the Editor:

There are many ways to give back to one's community including engaging in careers of service, volunteering, donating to causes, participating in community events and generally being aware of issues and resources in the community.

Since I started in my new role with Grant-Harney County CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), I have frequently heard that in the small communities we serve, the same individuals and businesses are asked repeatedly to volunteer with and donate to all of the various events and organizations in the area.

This is because in many ways our counties have a higher need for services than ever before. In 2011, there were 45 children in the state's care in our program's jurisdiction, and the number has risen to 76 today. Yet, we have even more limited resources to provide these services to each child in need.

The commitment of so many people to contribute to the health and well-being of our communities, regardless of these challenges, is inspiring and one reason rural communities remain so strong. Without the support of our advocates, volunteer board members, donors, professional community partners and event volunteers, sponsors and participants, we would not be able to do the work we do advocating for the best interests of abused and neglected children in the court system.

Moreover, we know that we are just one of the many recipients of the ways you give to your community. As I pause and reflect this Thanksgiving season, this gives me a deep sense of gratitude for my community.

Hannah Hinman
Executive director
Grant-Harney County CASA



Blue Mountain EAGLE
Grant County's Weekly Newspaper
USPS 226-340

Email: www.MyEagleNews.com
Phone: 541-575-0710

John Day, Oregon

MEMBER OREGON NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY BY **EO Media Group**

Periodicals Postage Paid at John Day and additional mailing offices.

1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION RATES (including online access)

Grant County	\$40
Everywhere else in U.S.	\$51
Outside Continental U.S.	\$60

Subscriptions must be paid prior to delivery

POSTMASTER — send address changes to
Blue Mountain Eagle
195 N. Canyon Blvd.
John Day, OR 97845-1187
Copyright © 2017 Blue Mountain Eagle

All rights reserved. No part of this publication covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any means — graphic, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, taping or information storage and retrieval systems — without written permission of the publisher.

PUBLISHER Marissa Williams, marissa@bmeagle.com
EDITOR Sean Hart, editor@bmeagle.com
REPORTER Richard Hanners, rick@bmeagle.com
COMMUNITY NEWS Angel Carpenter, angel@bmeagle.com
SPORTS Angel Carpenter, angel@bmeagle.com
MARKETING REP Kim Kell, ads@bmeagle.com
OFFICE MANAGER Lindsay Bullock, office@bmeagle.com
OFFICE ASSISTANT Alixandra Perkins, office@bmeagle.com

www.facebook.com/MyEagleNews [@MyEagleNews](https://twitter.com/MyEagleNews)