

# The weak argument for newsprint tariffs

American newspapers are under attack — from a Pacific Northwest paper company and the U.S. government.

It's an odd and unfortunate situation that will drive up costs for newspapers, including this one, unless the government reverses itself.

As you probably know, newspapers already face strong economic headwinds. Online shopping via big-name websites has hurt local merchants, whose advertising is the financial foundation of this newspaper and others. Meanwhile, many readers have shifted from print newspapers to online versions, although both versions have their attributes.

Like other newspapers, it's our job to adapt to changing readership habits and advertising opportunities. We have no desire to reduce our services and our local community coverage.

But a paper mill in Longview, Washington, is taking a different tack: It's crying foul, claiming foreign competitors don't play fairly.

North Pacific Paper Co., which produces newsprint and other paper, claims the Canadian government subsidizes Canadian paper manufacturers, enabling them to "dump" — that is, sell — their products at below-market prices in the U.S. The U.S. Department of Commerce bought that argument and has imposed substantial newsprint tariffs on newsprint imported from Canada.

The result has been a 20 to 30 percent jump in newsprint prices around the U.S. Newsprint already is the second-largest cost, next to personnel, for publishers. You can see that the price hike will have a big impact.

It's not only the economics

that concern us. It's mind-boggling that the Commerce Department accepted such a weak argument. Yes, paper mills have closed in Oregon and around the U.S. But Canadian competition is not the reason. The reality is that newsprint demand throughout North America has dropped 75 percent since 2000 as technology has replaced paper.

Most folks understand that. The tariffs, or duties, are opposed by the majority of U.S. newsprint manufacturers; by their trade association, the American Forest and Paper Association; and by newspapers and their trade groups, including the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association.

The opponents also include a wide range of other groups, such as the Heritage Foundation, religious publications, book companies and chambers of commerce.

By boosting costs, these tariffs will harm local businesses, including commercial printers, bookstores, directory publishers and newspapers. Unlike Wall Street and the hedge fund that owns North Pacific Paper, most local businesses survive on thin operating margins. Forced to spend more in one area, they must trim elsewhere — and the local economy suffers.

That's why we'd like your help. We'd be most appreciative if you could take a moment to contact members of Oregon's congressional delegation, asking them to overturn the "countervailing" and "antidumping" duties being imposed by the Commerce Department on Canadian newsprint and similar paper.

Your voice matters.

So does the voice of community newspapers across this great nation.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Crying wolf

To the Editor:

According to Aesop's fable, a lad tending his sheep in the fields thought it humorous to run home and cry, "Wolf, wolf!" The villagers rushed to the field to save their sheep. But there was no wolf. The boy laughed because he had tricked his neighbors. A week later he thought it would again be fun to run home crying, "Wolf!" Again concerned neighbors rushed to the fields but, again, no wolf.

Even later, the youngster still thought crying "wolf" was still a funny joke, as he rushed to the village for the third time. "Wolf, wolf," he cried loudly and repeatedly. But this time nobody paid attention to him. Nobody believed him. Of course, he had to return to his flock. To his dismay, in his absence, a real wolf had killed many sheep. His lying had led to this disaster.

Why repeat an ancient story about telling the truth? We all know the tale. It is because the President of the United States, the most powerful person in the world, lies constantly — constantly without remorse or punishment.

Actually the shepherd boy did not care for his flock. The sheep bore the terrible price for his lies. Lying Trump cares not for his nation. Are we deafened to lies? You and I are already in jeopardy. The governance of this country now borders on the insane. The consequences are ours to bear.

Leif Hatlestad  
Rogue River

ium's ability to meet the growing demand for global mobile communications on land, at sea and in the skies.

Iridium may potentially enable partners to create innovative products and solutions that haven't even been conceived of yet, made possible through the flexibility of Iridium's network. Iridium NEXT offers to: 1) Support more bandwidth and higher speeds for new products; 2) Enable partner solutions on a scale not yet imagined; 3) Provide service continuity and backwards compatibility; and 4) Be the world's first turnkey platform for innovative new capabilities by supporting new Iridium PRIME satellites.

All claims which bring home the strong message that the government-backed white space, through strategically placed towers, offers to provide wider coverage than the minimal coverage capabilities of local fiber optics being touted by the cities of John Day and Seneca and a quorum of the county governing body.

These entities are on the cusp of obligating massive county funds to supporting horse-and-buggy innovations that benefit very few. Such fiber optics will be outdated before it even gets operational and, hanging from exposed poles, can be brought down by a single pellet from a BB gun or shotgun. Open your wallets, Grant County residents, you may be paying for a dead horse through the next millennium.

Judy Kerr  
Canyon City

ers get off those dangerous drugs and save them from a life-threatening addiction. A person is less likely to be violent after smoking cannabis than before they smoked it.

Under current Oregon law, any law-abiding citizen over 21 in a banned county can grow four plants and smoke cannabis on their property. So supporting a ban on recreational sales does nothing to keep cannabis out of Grant County. So I'm urging citizens to make an informed decision and vote yes on initiative 12-71 on May 15. Look into the millions of dollars of state revenue we're missing out on because some people "just don't like it." Is it worth it?

Damon Olson  
Mt. Vernon

### What is Initiative 12-71?

To the Editor:

What is Initiative 12-71? Initiative 12-71 is a voter initiative on the May 15 ballot. Voters will decide whether to allow recreational marijuana sales and production in Grant County or to continue a ban, which makes Grant County ineligible to receive a portion of the millions being collected in tax revenue from the state's recreational marijuana program.

The OLCC oversees and regulates the program just like they do alcohol in the state. The only difference is the security and surveillance requirements are much higher for marijuana businesses than liquor stores. The 20 percent tax that is collected from sales is then distributed to counties that participate in the program.

It's no different than the tax on alcohol or the proceeds the lottery pays the state for legalized gambling. Maybe you never gambled or had a drink of alcohol in your life, but your local schools, roads, police and other services have all benefited from the tax the state collects from gambling and alcohol revenue. We're losing out on a potential billion-dollar industry. Participating counties have to be smiling all the way to the bank!

The longer we continue this ban the more revenue they collect. There's a couple of guarantees that come with voting yes on 12-71: jobs and revenue, the two things that everyone can agree is needed to save a collapsing economy.

This is a way of collecting tax revenue for a 911 program, police and schools, and your property taxes won't go up. Opportunities like this for revenue don't come up often, so vote yes and bring some positive economic news to Grant County!

Sonny Dryden  
Mt. Vernon

### What's your reason?

To the Editor:

What's your reason? "Because I just don't like it" seems to be the basis for the argument against allowing state legal marijuana production in Grant County. After talking with people, I've yet to hear anyone bring a fact-based argument against it. I welcome the debate. We need the discussion in our community so we can make an informed decision on whether to lift the ban Grant County has in place that makes us ineligible for a share of the millions being collected in state revenue.

So here are some facts you should know prior to a debate: The proper name is cannabis, not dope or marijuana; it's cannabis. People have been using it for thousands of years for medicinal, spiritual and recreational reasons, and there has never been a single overdose death, ever. It's impossible; you cannot overdose on cannabis. Doctors are now recommending it for multiple conditions like PTSD, seizures, arthritis, cancer and more. Cannabis can help people addicted to opioid painkill-

### Fiber optics 'a dead horse'

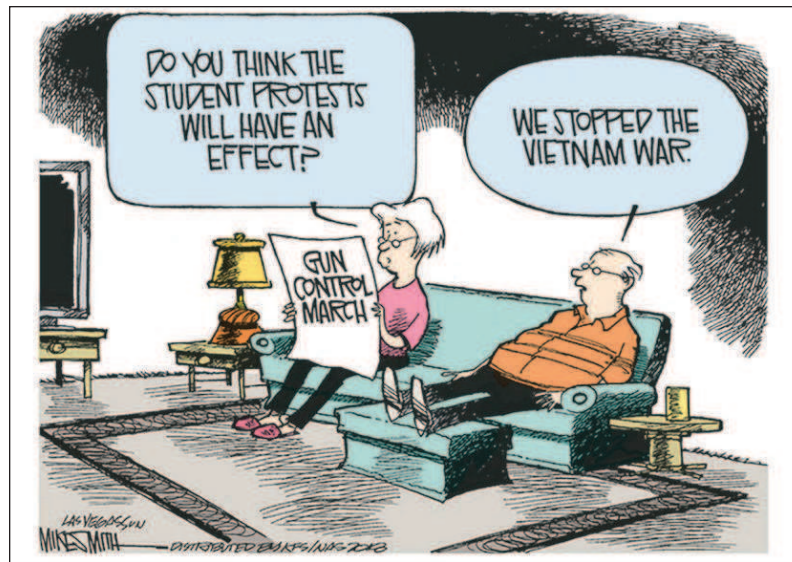
To the Editor:

A morning with the science channel (including tasteful interruptions of DQ burgers and colitis symptoms) and "How the Universe Works" is wondrously stupefying and shows, in astounding detail, planets beyond our solar system, elliptical orbits, elliptical planets, ice dunes on Mars, Pluto has gas (my sympathies for Pluto), new words like "Goldilocks Zone" (which is the even mean between too hot and too cold) and all that presumed scientific data, which is really only theory.

How tantalizing to assume to be able to determine planet formation and composition outside of our own planetary system.

However, the ever expanding theory entrepreneurs were rudely interrupted by the televised launch of a state-of-the-art satellite, which will further enable services of Iridium NEXT. Iridium delivers its uncompromising vision for the future of global communications and offers to dramatically enhance Irid-

Letters policy: Letters to the Editor is a forum for Blue Mountain Eagle readers to express themselves on local, state, national or world issues. Brevity is good, but longer letters will be asked to be contained to 350 words. No personal attacks; challenge the opinion, not the person. No thank-you letters. Submissions to this page become property of the Eagle. The Eagle reserves the right to edit letters for length and for content. Letters must be original and signed by the writer. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Writers should include a telephone number so they can be reached for questions. We must limit all contributors to one letter per person per month. Deadline is 5 p.m. Friday. Send letters to editor@bmeagle.com, or Blue Mountain Eagle, 195 N. Canyon Blvd., John Day, OR 97845; or fax to 541-575-1244.



## WHERE TO WRITE

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- **Grant County Courthouse** — 201 S. Humbolt St., Suite 280, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0059. Fax: 541-575-2248.
- **Canyon City** — P.O. Box 276, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0509. Fax: 541-575-0515. Email: tocc1862@centurylink.net.
- **Dayville** — P.O. Box 321, Dayville 97825. Phone: 541-987-2188. Fax: 541-987-2187. Email: dville@ortelco.net
- **John Day** — 450 E. Main St, John Day, 97845. Phone: 541-575-0028. Fax: 541-575-1721. Email: cityjd@centurytel.net.
- **Long Creek** — P.O. Box 489, Long

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- **Monument** — P.O. Box 426, Monument 97864. Phone and fax: 541-934-2025. Email: cityofmonument@centurytel.net.
- **Mt. Vernon** — P.O. Box 647, Mt. Vernon 97865. Phone: 541-932-4688. Fax: 541-932-4222. Email: cmtv@ortelco.net.
- **Prairie City** — P.O. Box 370, Prairie City 97869. Phone: 541-820-3605. Fax: 820-3566. Email: pchall@ortelco.net.
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