

Trade outlook offers glimmer of hope for farmers

Last week Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue released details of the administration's response to trade damages from retaliatory tariffs by China and other countries.

The plan includes nearly \$4.7 billion in direct payments to producers harmed, more than \$1.2 billion in government food purchases and \$200 million to develop foreign markets.

It is, at best, a stop-gap measure. Assistance checks and government purchases are not a replacement for stable export markets. We urge the administration to make good on its campaign promises and reach fair agreements with our major trading partners.

American farmers and ranchers export \$135 billion in products each year. They have a lot riding on trade and are feeling more than a little nervous.

One of the central themes of Donald Trump's campaign for the presidency was that the United States was not well served by its many trade agreements.

It was a message that resonated with manufacturers, farmers, union workers and the creators of intellectual property — none of whom can survive without trade, all of whom find themselves perpetually challenged by trade.

People have been complaining about various provisions in the North American Free Trade Agreement since the first President Bush negotiated it and President Clinton signed it. China's manipulation of its currency and its lax enforcement of patents have tested administrations since

trade relations opened up in 1979. Dealings with the European Union and its byzantine bureaucracy have always been vexing.

And all of the candidates — Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders and Trump — said they'd pull out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the big 12-party deal among all of our big Pacific Rim trading partners, with the exception of China.

It should not have come as a surprise that President Trump sought to redress these grievances.

What has been surprising is that he has chosen to fight all of our best trading partners at once.

We are out of TPP, we've slapped tariffs on China and a host of other partners, NAFTA has been blown apart.

And while he has followed through on his promises to extricate the United States from unfair trade deals, Trump has fallen woefully short on delivering better replacements.

There could be some progress in the offing.

Even as Perdue was announcing the details of the aid package, the president was announcing that the United States and Mexico had reached an agreement to replace NAFTA. It is unclear at this writing whether the Canadians will join in the rewritten agreement.

Nonetheless, the trade situation continues to hang heavy over farmers. They rightfully worry that the trade relationships they have worked so hard to develop will be lost if tensions are not soon eased.

Farmers and ranchers would rather sell to trading partners than receive cash assistance checks.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Regarding McLeod-Skinner and Phoenix

To the Editor:

The upcoming election for our Second Congressional District is important, so I would like to set the record straight regarding some recent false information that has been made public by candidate Jamie McLeod-Skinner. Setting the record straight has nothing to do with Jamie McLeod-Skinner's political party affiliation.

As the mayor of the city of Phoenix, Oregon, I've become aware of misleading information being disseminated by McLeod-Skinner in an article in the East Oregonian newspaper, during a radio interview and in other areas. I have concerns for two specific statements. Jamie McLeod-Skinner was not, as she reported, "the eighth city manager of Phoenix, Oregon, in seven years." Ms. McLeod-Skinner was the city's third official city manager in 11 years. She was terminated by the Phoenix City Council after just four months.

Ms. McLeod-Skinner accuses the city of Phoenix of "fiscal mismanagement and inappropriate use of funds." Ms. McLeod-Skinner publicly made similar false claims when the city terminated her employment. Of course, the city takes such accusations extremely seriously. The city, therefore, hired a distinguished city manager with over 30 years of experience and a CPA firm to investigate Ms. McLeod-Skinner's outrageous claims. Independent and credible experts found McLeod-Skinner's claims to be unfounded.

I encourage Ms. McLeod-Skinner to please stop misrepresenting her Oregon work experience. Our citizens and public servants deserve better.

Please understand that, as Phoenix's mayor, I cannot emphasize enough how the city of Phoenix has always and will always be fully committed to open and appropriate use of public funds entrusted to the city by our hardworking taxpayers. My intent is to defend Phoenix and make the citizens of our community proud, as indeed we are here in the wonderful city of Phoenix, Oregon.

Chris Luz
Phoenix

Editor's note: McLeod-Skinner's campaign has released the following information about Phoenix: jamiefororegon.com/lets-talk-about-phoenix. City of Phoenix meeting minutes, including the March 8, 2017, council meeting at which she was terminated without cause, are available at phoenixoregon.gov.

Initiative intended for citizen protection

To the Editor:

This letter concerns the unnecessary court action filed concerning the U.N.-free zone, road closures, etc. The petition, voted on by the public in 2002, was done with citizen protection as the intent. The procedures and rules were followed as known at the time.

What must be asked immediately is who, what, when, why and what is the objective that is not being discussed. It is obvious that there is an agenda against the intelligent citizens of Grant County.

The U.N.-free zone petition protects citizens from any actions of the United Nations including water, Wildlands Project, protection against private property seizure and more. The wolf is one tool of the Wildlands Project.

Quote: "Does ... the Wildlands Project advocate the end of industrial civilization? Most Assuredly. Everything civilized must go ..." — Editor John Davis - UN Wildlands Project Journal, Wild Earth. All of the processes began with the UN "Brundtland Report" as a political concept to take American soil, by hidden means. The "objective" is to move all human activity to the border regions. The process: Brundtland Report 1987, Rio Accord 1992, Sustainable Dev. Commission 1993-1995. Executive order No. 12858, to insert Brundtland Report, by many other names, into federal, state and county policies. Noting the research time, 1987 through 2002, the petitioners were aware of the ramifications of the immense lurking danger, even though not visible initially.

The spurious attack on your county, property rights, via disinformation and underhanded manipulation of citizenry is criminal of itself.

The suit against all the issues must be dismissed until evidence can be produced and evaluated by the court. The reason to attack the petition is because it stands in the way of other nefarious action coming.

Were the petition and road closure issues moot, there would be no attempt to circumvent the will of the citizen. One more thing, neither the president, nor Congress, can place treaty over the Constitution. The material is available to anyone to protect themselves and your county, and probably the other 3,500 or so counties in the United States, who would benefit from your petitioners' wisdom.

Robert Powell
Oregon City

Candidates should debate

To the Editor:

This November, Grant County residents will have an opportunity to choose a new county commissioner. During the primary election this spring, we had several candidates to choose from, and they had a wide range of experiences and ideas of what they had to offer us voters.

The two candidates in the upcoming election appear to offer a contrast in philosophies for how county government serves its citizens, but how different are they? In order to find out how they differ, wouldn't it benefit us all if they shared their views during a public debate, hosted and moderated by an independent third party?

Each candidate could share their vision of the role of county government, respond to predetermined questions and even perhaps have the opportunity to ask and respond to a question or two from their opponent.

Open debate has always been an important part of the political process to help voters make an informed decision. I hope the two candidates for county commissioner provide this opportunity.

Tim Unterwegner
John Day



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 Creek 97856. Phone: 541-421-3601. Fax: 541-421-3075. Email: info@cityoflongcreek.com.
- **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.
- **Seneca** — P.O. Box 208, Seneca 97873. Phone and fax: 541-542-2161. Email: senecaoregon@gmail.com.

SALEM

- **Gov. Kate Brown, D** — 254 State Capitol, Salem 97310. Phone: 503-378-3111. Fax: 503-378-6827. Website: www.governor.state.or.us/governor.html.
- **Oregon Legislature** — State Capitol, Salem, 97310. Phone: (503) 986-1180. Website: www.leg.state.or.us (includes Oregon Constitution and Oregon Revised Statutes).
- **Oregon Legislative Information** — (For updates on bills, services, capitol or messages for legislators) — 800-332-2313.
- **Sen. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario** — 900 Court St. NE, S-301, Salem 97301. Phone: 503-986-1730. Website: www.oregonlegislature.gov/Bentz. Email: Sen.CliffBentz@oregonlegislature.gov.

GUEST COMMENT

Don't be misled by false ads

By Kimberly Herrmann
To the Blue Mountain Eagle

Online and otherwise, there's a lot of information out there, and sometimes it's difficult to tell what sources are credible. With millions of people relying on Social Security, scammers target audiences who are looking for program and benefit information.

The law that addresses misleading Social Security and Medicare advertising prohibits people or non-government businesses from using words or emblems that mislead others. Their advertising can't lead people to believe that they represent, are somehow af-

iliated with or endorsed or approved by Social Security or the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

People are often misled by advertisers who use the terms "Social Security" or "Medicare." Often, these companies offer Social Security services for a fee, even though the same services are available directly from Social Security free of charge. These services include getting a corrected Social Security card showing a person's married name; a Social Security card to replace a lost card; a Social Security statement; and a Social Security number for a child.

If you receive misleading information about Social Security, send the complete ad, including the envelope, to Office of the Inspector General Fraud Hotline, Social Security Administration, P.O. Box 17768, Baltimore, MD 21235.

You can learn more about how we combat fraudulent advertisers by reading our publication "What You Need to Know About Misleading Advertising" at socialsecurity.gov/pubs/EN-05-10005.pdf.

You can also report Social Security fraud to the Office of the Inspector General at oig.ssa.gov/report.

Kimberly Herrmann is a Social Security public affairs specialist.



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