

Another farm bill deadline missed

Last month Senate and House conferees working on the 2018 Farm Bill failed to reach an agreement before the old farm bill expired and without Congress voting to extend it.

Congress has once again let down American farmers and ranchers who need to know the extent of farm programs when making plans for next year's crop. It is impossible for those in agriculture to plan for the next season without knowing how the federal government intends to impact their business.

This has happened all too often before.

The 2014 Farm Bill was supposed to be the 2012 Farm Bill. It took more than three years to negotiate, despite original promises in 2011 that it would be passed before the 2012 presidential primary season. In reality, constant wrangling over the cost of nutrition programs and crop insurance subsidies mandated that the old 2008 bill be extended a number of times before Congress came up with a bill it could pass.

Each farm bill has many parts. Some programs, such as commodity and nutrition programs, were created under separate legislation. The farm bill provides funding for these programs and provides governing language that for the life of the bill supersedes

the "permanent" legislation. The farm bill also creates new programs not included in any other legislation.

So in establishing an expiration date on the farm bill, Congress puts a gun to its own head. Commodity programs revert to "permanent" law written in the '30s and '40s should it fail to enact a measure to replace or extend the expiring farm bill. Other programs die altogether.

The permanent laws are so antiquated they have little relevance to modern agriculture. Trying to apply them in the 21st century should create consequences too dire for Congress to ignore its duty. Or at least that's the theory. Congress has repeatedly failed to yield to its own extortion.

Senate and House conferees are confident they will reach agreement and pass a bill before the end of the year. We'll see. Between now and then there will be an election. Given the current divisive politics, that couldn't possibly hold things up.

But it also provides an opportunity.

While we don't think much of legislators who can't meet their own deadlines, we have to put a fair amount of the blame on their employers.

We may not get the government we deserve, as the old saw goes, but we do get the one we vote for.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hiding from the public

To the Editor:

Gordon Larson, candidate for county commissioner, recently accepted an invitation from the Grant County Chamber of Commerce, a neutral organization, to a debate or public forum with Sam Palmer, also a candidate. Palmer refused the invitation. Larson has had town halls in most Grant County communities and has another one on Oct. 23, 6:30 p.m., at the Canyon City Community Hall. He has been meeting and greeting Grant County residents all over the county. Larson and his supporters are going door to door listening to people's concerns. If Palmer is making that kind of effort, I haven't seen any indication of it. I don't think he has.

Jaime McLeod-Skinner, candidate for our federal 2nd Congressional District, finally got Greg Walden, also a candidate for the same position, to engage in one debate. Walden refused to have the public at that debate. When asked during that debate if he would commit to two more, he refused. Walden is the current representative but hasn't met with the general public in a town hall setting in over 530 days as of the end of September 2018. McLeod-Skinner has been in Grant County twice this election season, holding two town halls and a meet and greet, and this district is the fifth largest in geographical area in the nation!

People who have met and listened to Larson and McLeod-Skinner know that they have the administrative experience needed for the positions they seek and are deeply committed to responding to their constituents' needs.

What do we know about Palmer's experience or his positions on issues? If he won't submit to a public debate before he is an elected official, how responsive to the public will he be if he is elected?

If Walden refuses to hold town halls for what is approaching two years, and gets re-elected, why would he be willing to meet with us in the future? Walden has betrayed the interests of the people in his district in various ways, not the least by threatening their access to affordable health care. Maybe that's one of the reasons he hides from the public.

Nancy Nickel
John Day

Where's the debate?

To the Editor:

One of the primary skills a county commissioner must have is the ability to engage with all constituents including fellow court members, concerned citizens and organizations. Grant County Court meetings are open public forums where questions and concerns are discussed and debated.

For voters to make an informed decision I believe a debate between

the two remaining candidates is essential. I have asked Gordon Larson to challenge Sam Palmer to a debate. He has attempted to engage Sam several times, and Sam has refused. If Sam Palmer believes he is the best person to represent Grant County as commissioner, why does he refuse to participate? Is he afraid to debate about the issues important to our county's future? This unwillingness to engage in constructive debate renders Sam unable to represent all citizens of Grant County. Ask yourself what issues you have that Sam Palmer will not address. I will cast my vote for a candidate willing and able to address all issues that concern all members of Grant County. Vote Gordon Larson!

Gail Beverlin
Canyon City

Larson listens and is accessible

To the Editor:

Two qualities we believe to be most important in our local elected officials are their accessibility and their willingness to listen to their constituents.

Gordon Larson has proven in both his campaign for Grant County Court commissioner and in his career as a public servant his accessibility and his willingness to listen to the citizens of Grant County. During his campaign, Gordon has held a number of meet and greet opportunities in locations throughout the county, and he has maintained both a website and Facebook page. Gordon is also approachable on a daily basis as he moves about the county, attending numerous "happenings" in and around Grant County.

If these qualities are also important to you, please join us in voting for Gordon Larson for Grant County commissioner in the November election.

Kris and Roy Beal
Mt. Vernon

Larson has 'skills, influence and administrative experience'

To the Editor:

I endorse Gordon Larson for Grant County commissioner. Gordon is passionate about helping Grant County residents work together to restore and revitalize our county.

As a retired police commander, and with many years of involvement in the community, he has the skills, influence and administrative experience required of an effective county commissioner.

Please join me in voting for Gordon Larson. He will be a hard-working and positive commissioner.

Pam Minster
John Day

Best for the county

To the Editor:

I strongly support Gordon Larson for county commissioner. I believe he is clearly the best candidate due to his time living and working in the community in many positive ways, his honesty and integrity and his unceasing efforts to make a difference in a healthy way for Grant County. He is proactive, involved and cares about all of the citizens' ideas and opinions. Please vote and, if possible, please make Gordon your choice. Let's move Grant County forward!

Vicki Thompson
Mt. Vernon

Save our flag

To the Editor:

First some flash in the pan takes a knee. Then more and more football players take notice and join in. Where will it end?

Now, before you rant and rave about black rights, this is not about black rights, white rights or any color of your choice. It is about our flag! The flag known around the world and even on the moon as the symbol of the United States of America.

It is a complete and utter disgrace to insult our flag, our country, our Americans and most of all our veterans! Check your history. How many have died for his flag? If the black players want to protest, fine — have a rally, have a protest, have a march or whatever, but don't drag the country's symbol down for racial reasons.

The NFL has backed down on their stance; ESPN, FOX and Nike have all decided not to recognize the National Anthem. No TV coverage! Enough!

Here's my idea: Sunday, Nov. 11, 2018, Veterans Day, football Sunday, why not for one day have all patriotic American football fans boycott all the games. No matter the venue — TV, radio, in person, whatever you use to watch football, stop. Let the NFL know where you stand! The millions of dollars lost by doing this has to wake up those in charge. If this isn't enough, there is always playoffs, championships and finally the Super Bowl.

What better day than Veterans Day after all. "If you don't stand for something you fall for anything."

What's next? No anthem, no president, no government, no laws. Where will it end? I say Nov. 11, 2018, America will save our flag.

Charles Leiss
Prairie City

'We endorse Gordon Larson'

To the Editor:

We endorse Gordon Larson for county commissioner.

Tom and Cheryl Berry
John Day

See LETTERS, Page A5



WHERE TO WRITE

GRANT COUNTY

- **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.
- **Rep. Lynn Findley, R-Vale** — 900 Court St. NE, H-475, Salem 97301. Phone: 503-986-1460. Website: www.oregonlegislature.gov/findley. Email: Rep.LynnFindley@oregonlegislature.gov.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

- **The White House**, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20500; Phone-comments: 202-456-1111; Switchboard: 202-456-1414.
- **U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D** — 516 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. Phone: 202-224-5244. Email: wayne_kinney@wyden.senate.gov Website: http://wyden.senate.gov Fax: 202-228-2717.
- **U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, D** — 313 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. Phone: 202-224-3753. Email: senator@merkley.senate.gov. Fax: 202-228-3997. Oregon offices include One World Trade Center, 121 S.W. Salmon St., Suite 1250, Portland, OR 97204; and 310 S.E. Second St., Suite 105, Pendleton, OR 97801. Phone: 503-326-3386; 541-278-1129. Fax: 503-326-2990.
- **U.S. Rep. Greg Walden, R** — (Second District) 1404 Longworth Building, Washington D.C. 20515. Phone: 202-225-6730. No direct email because of spam. Website: www.walden.house.gov Fax: 202-225-5774. Medford office: 14 North Central, Suite 112, Medford, OR 97501. Phone: 541-776-4646. Fax: 541-779-0204.
- **Pending Bills:** For information on bills in Congress, Phone: 202-225-1772.



Grant County's Weekly Newspaper

PUBLISHER.....CHRIS RUSH, CRUSH@EOMEDIAGROUP.COM
 EDITOR & GENERAL MANAGER...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
 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT.....MAKENNA ADAIR, OFFICE@BMEAGLE.COM
 OFFICE ASSISTANT.....ALIXANDRA HAND, OFFICE@BMEAGLE.COM

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

Periodicals Postage Paid at John Day and additional mailing offices.

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

USPS 226-340

www.facebook.com/MyEagleNews @MyEagleNews

Copyright © 2018 Blue Mountain Eagle
 All rights reserved. No part of this publication covered by the copyright herein 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.