

Brown, Democrats not helping state farmers, ranchers

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown and the Democrat majority in the Legislature want to make sure that no one in the state, least of all farmers and ranchers, receive any benefits from regulatory relief from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

That's bad for farmers and ranchers, and it's bad for Oregon. Part of Donald Trump's election campaign focused on regulatory reform. As far as agriculture is concerned, he's followed through.

The administration has proposed new clean water rules that are less ambiguous and less sweeping than the infamous "Waters of the U.S." rules proposed in the waning days of the Obama administration. Under Trump, the EPA has taken the position that outcomes are more important than punitive enforcement actions.

There will always be honest differences on environmental policy. It seems, though, that the impact of each rule should be taken on its own merits.

But Democrats in Oregon have taken a more simplistic approach: Obama rules good, Trump rules bad.

Under House Bill 2250, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and the Oregon Health Authority would have to regularly check whether federal regulations have been rendered

"significantly less protective" since the end of the Obama administration.

The DEQ and OHA would then have to recommend or take actions to ensure that Oregon's environmental standards are at least as protective as federal standards before the Trump administration took office.

Proponents of the legislation argue it's necessary because the Trump administration has sought to undermine the purpose of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

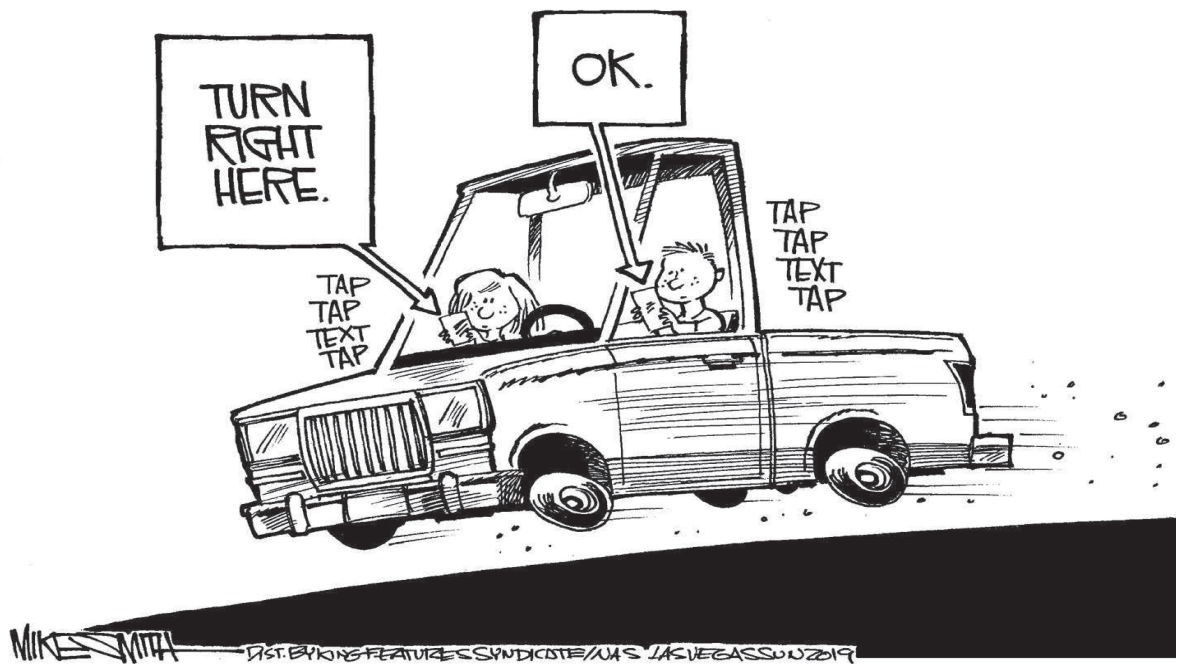
Rep. Werner Reschke, R-Klamath Falls, isn't buying it.

He says the bill won't accomplish much of substance, but it will open the state government to litigation from environmental groups and others who disagree with its assessments of changes to federal policy.

"In effect, the bill by default assumes new environmental rules are and will be worse than what previously existed and uses a date to set the bar," Reschke said. "I find this kind of policy making under the guise of protecting Oregon's environment to be more political science than science."

We agree. HB 2250 assumes that any regulations passed prior to Jan. 20, 2016, are, without question, infallible. It's a position that probably plays well to the base, but doesn't serve the interests of Oregonians.

NEVADA BILL WOULD ALLOW SOME 14-YEAR-OLDS TO DRIVE



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FARMER'S FATE

4 a.m. bedtime stories



Brianna Walker

I am pretty sure that we were asleep before our eyelids had closed. Unfortunately, the wonderful feeling of sleep was more elusive for our 3-year old. Pretty soon, my eyelids were peeled open: "Mommy, I'm hungry. Mommy... mommy?"

My lips felt thick as I tried talking. I tried encouraging him to go find something in the fridge. There had to be something in there he could eat: cottage cheese, butter, frosting, candy bars — anything so that I didn't have to move. It seemed to work, for a few minutes. Too soon he was back, "Mommy, I'm thirsty. Mommy... mommy!"

This time I pushed him off to my husband, and I rolled over. What seemed like minutes later he was back. "Mommy, I can't sleep."

I groaned, "I thought Daddy was going to get you something to drink?"

"I already drank it," he chirped cheerfully. "Sing me songs. Pleeeeeease, Mommy? Please?"

This became a nightly routine for nearly a week. Regardless of how early we woke him up or how hard we tried to keep him from napping, he would fall asleep around 7 or 8 — and be wide awake by 10 p.m. My husband and I had never felt so jet-lagged in our lives. Up for a glass of water, I glared at the clock on the oven. We have got to stop meeting this way 4 a.m., I glared at blurry blue numbers. We're supposed to be pillow friends, not kitchen mates!

One evening after I had sung every one of my son's favorite songs at least half a dozen times, I told him it was Daddy's turn to tell him a story. My eyes burned, and my legs throbbled. I wanted sleep. I needed sleep. My toddler leaped

over the top of me, and I felt him jump on my husband's snoring body.

"Tell me a story, Daddy! Mommy said you'd tell me a story!"

My husband groaned, and had I cared to open my eyes, I am sure he was sending me a dirty look — or at least a dirty vibe, his eyes may have been too tired to open enough to send a look.

"It was a dark and stormy night..." his story started. Soon my sleep was again interrupted by a squirming kid thrashing around under the covers.

"Too scary, Daddy! Too scary!" Scary bear stories. My husband was telling our son, who was having trouble going to sleep, scary bear stories. Now he was wide awake — and scared!

"No more stories, just songs," he pleaded.

My husband acquiesced and began singing in a quiet voice:

Five little monkeys swinging from the trees teasing Mr. Crocodile you can't catch me along comes Mr. Crocodile, hungry as can be

... and **CHOMPED** (he suddenly lunged at the covers hiding our son) *that monkey right out of the tree.*

He sang the song over and over, counting down with each "chomped" monkey. Soon our son was squealing and hiding — scared and hyper — and not a chance in this world that he was going to sleep the rest of the night.

I felt kind of like that hungry, cranky, crocodile — ready to chomp something — and I decided that my earlier belief needed to be modified: Jet lag is for amateurs — and parents of toddlers!

Brianna Walker occasionally writes about the Farmer's Fate for the Blue Mountain Eagle.

I've always believed that jet lag was for amateurs. When one grows up sleeping behind the seat or on the floor of the tractor their mom is driving, or behind your dad on a forklift, one can sleep anywhere — including tiny, sardine-sized airline seats. Which means, when you step off that plane looking worse than your passport photo, all you need is a quick shower and you are ready to adventure or work. That belief has been upheld until this last trip to the Orient — a trip on which my 3-year-old's bladder just couldn't keep up with the airline apple juice and ginger ale.

"I gotta go to the bathroom, Mommy."

It seemed we hadn't been back in our seats 30 minutes when I heard, "Daddy, I gotta go again."

I closed my eyes. At least he wasn't asking me.

"Wake up, wake up. I gotta go." I felt little fingers push up my eyelids. "I gotta go bad."

Still later, "Are you sleeping? I gotta go pee."

I hummed the tune to "The Wheels in the Bus," as I unbuckled my son and watched as he held his daddy's hand down the long aisle back to the cramped little airplane bathroom.

This toddler in the plane goes up and down, up and down, up and down

the toddler in the plane goes up and down, all the long flight through

Finally arriving home, after more than 30 hours of bathroom breaks in cars, buses and planes, rummy didn't begin to describe our bleary eyes and achy muscles. Falling into bed seemed like the best thing to do, but it was the middle of the day, and both my husband and I had work to catch up on. Finally, 7 p.m. arrived, and we gratefully collapsed into bed.

Dugout fences unsafe

To the Editor:

I was able to go see my grandson play baseball March 21-23 at the Seventh Street Complex and was surprised by something that happened during the first game.

A foul ball went into the dugout where the South Umpqua players were sitting, and one of the players was hit in the face and required some stitches. It could have been much worse if he hadn't been hit in the jaw but the throat or side of his head. I was unaware that there are no safety fences in front of the dugouts in either field, and only what looks like a hitching post in the field where the Prospectors play. That seemed even more dangerous as the boys were leaning on the top with their faces protruding toward the back of the batters, looking rather like targets. Some of the parents said there were other schools that had inadequate protective fences, but some had enclosed fronts with openings on each end.

Seems a sort of simple solution to prevent a very serious injury, or

maybe just continue to play Russian roulette with the kids.

Mary Brown
Prairie City

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A different perspective on the city's plans

To the Editor:

In regards to the many front page articles about all the wonderful things the city of John Day has done and are planning to do, I would like to offer a little different perspective for your readers to consider.

To begin with, government at any level should never be competing with private enterprise whether it be a greenhouse, broadband or what have you. Give me one example of a government-run enterprise that is not taxpayer funded, makes a profit and actually pays taxes.

The city of John Day, by their own admission, is no exception. If they can't run the pool and the 911 center cost effectively, what are the chances that a greenhouse or broadband enterprise will be any different, considering they have

no experience, no trained personnel, no equipment and no capital. Even if they obtain free taxpayer grant money for construction, it is highly unlikely that they will ever be able to even cover the maintenance costs.

As for the rest of the county "stepping up," we have been supporting John Day businesses for decades. But with today's shopping opportunities via broadband, we no longer have to do so unless we choose to. We can get most everything we need delivered right to our front door, saving time, money and wear and tear on our vehicles.

The latest census shows the population of Grant County at 7,200 and the city of John Day at 1,700 of that total.

When you look at the facts presented, a logical-minded reader might draw at least a couple conclusions. One might be that perhaps the city of John Day has not been making very wise financial decisions, and it may also appear as though the city of John Day needs the rest of the county a whole lot more than we need them!

Pete Hettinga
Dayville

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