

OUR VIEW

# Everyday Oregonians left out of talks on carbon policy

The push to give cities in Oregon more leverage to decarbonize buildings got defanged in the Legislature this year. The bill got a do-over. It created a task force to look at ways to decarbonize buildings.

If opponents of Senate Bill 1518 thought they won a victory, it seems they won a delay. The task force has a list of policy options it is getting ready for the 2023 Legislature that are even more wide-ranging. Maybe legislators won't take action on all of them. But watching the options the task force is considering could be like looking into a crystal ball to see Oregon's energy future. That's especially true if Democrats continue to control the Legislature and the governor's office after November.

Electrify. Electrify. Electrify.

That's a consistent theme. Natural gas for heat, for cooking? Yes, there are voices on the task force who keep bringing up how natural gas should continue to play a role. Maybe we are wrong, but those voices sure don't seem to reflect the majority view. The task force wants renewable electricity to be king.

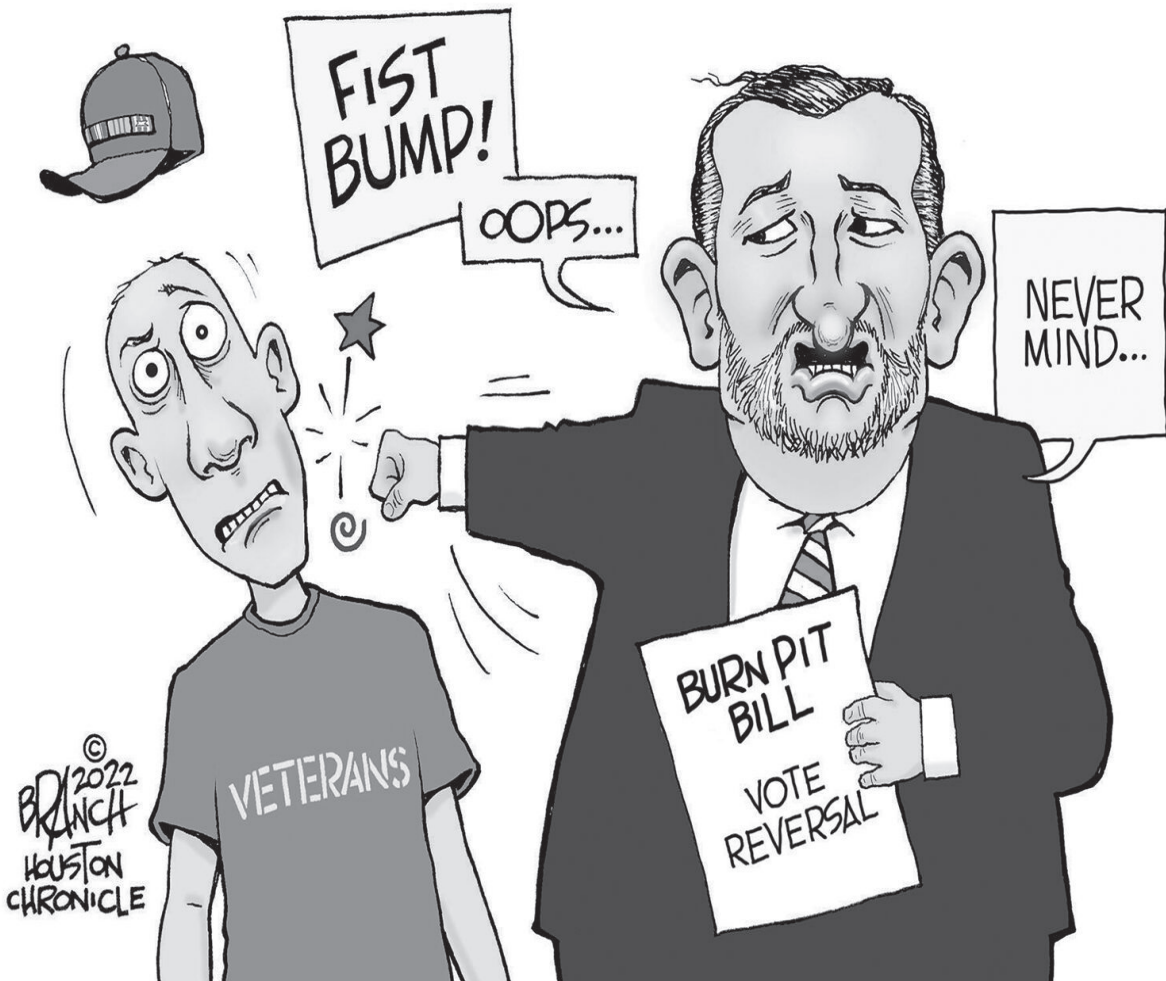
We could hear it recently in the discussion about a possible new mission for the Energy Trust of Oregon. The discussion was to change its mission. The Energy Trust gets its money from customers of the big utilities and uses it to stoke energy efficiency. It is now fuel-neutral. Electricity and natural gas are both OK. The proposal is to change its purpose to greenhouse gas reduction and equity. Oregon's natural gas companies may not appreciate that.

We could hear the call for the electricity focus in the discussion of electric heat pumps. Heat pumps can heat and cool. They do what they do very efficiently. Task force members talked about ways to encourage more people to install them — incentives on top of any new federal incentives or existing incentives.

There was even a discussion about the state bypassing the choices consumers or builders make for appliances in new homes and going to manufacturers and distributors. The thinking is incentives or rules could guide manufacturers and distributors to offer only options powered by electricity and that are high-efficiency. Then no "wrong" choices would be made.

Another topic that came up is to follow California's lead on requiring appliances to be "smart." Smart in this context is that appliances can schedule their use when there is less electricity demand. So maybe your car charger or dishwasher kicks itself on at 1 a.m. That could help spread out the energy demand over the day and reduce the need for peak electric capacity. Oregonians might like it, if they could control it. They might not like it if someone else was switching their appliances on and off.

What's missing in these discussions is the input of Oregonians. Yes, there are many fine people on the task force and they represent different perspectives and interests. You should take a look at the ideas on the table and tell them what you want. You can see the concepts under consideration here, [tinyurl.com/Oregon081022](http://tinyurl.com/Oregon081022). And you can tell the task force what you think by email here, [JTFREB.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:JTFREB.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov).



## FARMER'S FATE

# Look what the cat dragged in

Common as cornbread, old as dirt, funny as all get-out — homespun expressions that link to our rural and agricultural past, conveying the spirit and plainspoken humor of our ancestors and pioneers.

Many of these are in my regular vocabulary as my parents and grandparents oft quoted them. Others showcase wisdom descended from "Poor Richard's Almanac" and others are just funny.

Here are some of my favorite axioms and adages — a collection of sayings "as big as all hell and half of Texas."

**Acceptable:** It's better than a poke in the eye with a sharp stick. That's close enough for government work. Might as well — can't dance, never could sing, and it's too wet to plow.

**Dishonest:** He's on a first-name basis with the bottom of the deck. So crooked that if he swallowed a nail he'd spit up a corkscrew.

**Honest:** You can take that to the bank. He's so honest you could shoot craps with him over the phone. You can hang your hat on that.

**Angry:** She could start a fight in an empty house. Mad as a mule chewing bumblebees

**Timid:** He's yellow as mustard but without the bite.

**Busy:** He's so busy you'd think he was twins. She's jumping like hot grease on a skillet. Busy as a one-legged cat in a sandbox.

**Unsophisticated:** He's so country he thinks a seven-course meal is a possum and a six-pack.

**Capable, Experienced:** She's got some snap in her garters. There's no slack in his rope.

**General Advice:** Never sign nothing by neon light. Keep your saddle oiled and your gun greased.



Brianna Walker

If you cut your own firewood, it'll warm you twice. Don't hang your wash on someone else's line. Better to keep your mouth shut and seem a fool than to open it and

remove all doubt.

**Cheap:** Tight as a tick. He'll squeeze a nickel till the buffalo screams. She has short arms and deep pockets.

**Crazy:** She's one bubble off plumb. Missing a few buttons off his shirt.

**Rich:** She's got more than she can say grace over. Rich enough to eat her laying hens.

**Poor:** Hasn't got a pot to pee in or a window to throw it out of. So poor their Sunday supper is fried water. Too poor to paint, too proud to whitewash.

**Hot:** Hot as the hubs of hell. So hot the hens are laying hard-boiled eggs.

**Sad:** Sad enough to bring a tear to a glass eye.

**Small, Thin:** About as big as the little end of nothing. Thin as a rake and twice as sexy.

**Tired:** Looks like she's been chewed up, spit out, and stepped on. One wheel down and the axle dragging.

**Sick:** He's got a hitch in his gitalong. You'd have to get better to die.

**Talkative:** He could talk the gate off its hinges. He shoots off his mouth so much he must eat bullets for breakfast. She speaks 10 words a second, with gusts to 50.

**Put-downs:** Even a blind hog can find an acorn once in a while. Anytime you happen to pass my house, I'd sure appreciate it.

**Vain:** He broke his arm patting himself on the back. I'd like to buy him for what he's worth and sell him for what he thinks he'll bring. She's so spoiled salt couldn't save her.

**Dead:** He gave up his guitar for a harp.

**Unwelcome:** As welcome as an outhouse breeze. As welcome as a porcupine at a nudist colony.

**Dumb:** If a duck had his brain, it would fly north for the winter.

If brains were leather, he couldn't saddle a flea. If his brains were dynamite, he couldn't blow his nose. He don't know a widget from a whangdoodle.

**Confused:** Confused as a goat on AstroTurf. I can explain it to you, but I can't understand it for you.

**Immoral, Wild:** Loose as ashes in the wind. She's found a new dasher for her churn. They ate supper before they said grace. They planted their crop before they built their fence. They've got a cotton-patch license.

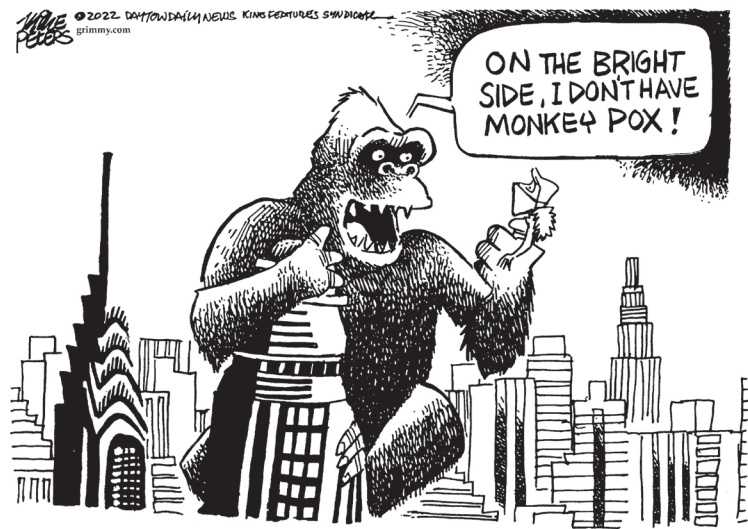
**Inept, Worthless:** Couldn't ride a nightmare without falling out of bed. Worthless as teats on a bull. Like pushing a wheelbarrow with rope handles. About as useful as a trapdoor on a canoe

**Distance:** I won't say it's far, but I had to grease the wagon twice before I hit the main road. They lived so far out in the country that the sun set between their house and town. Two hoots and a holler away.

**Lazy:** He hangs out more often than Mama's washing. He's like a blister — he doesn't show up till the work's all done.

That about puts the rag on the bush — it's time to swap spit and hit the road.

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



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- Oregon Legislature** — State Capitol, Salem, 97310. Phone: 503-986-1180. Website: [leg.state.or.us](http://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, [oregonlegislature.gov](http://oregonlegislature.gov).
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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### City housing plan doesn't add up

To the Editor:

Regarding the city's plans to help pay for development costs for new home construction using a Business Oregon loan from the state (Blue Mountain Eagle, Aug. 10), according to my calculations, a \$1,851,797 loan at 2.41% interest over 20 years costs \$9,731 per month or \$116,772 per year. Will the money set aside in the tax-increment financing program be sufficient to make those payments, especially in the initial years when new homes only exist on paper? Would anything be left over from the TIF revenue for other purposes?

Here's another question — if most or all of the TIF revenue over

the next 20 years goes to paying off this state loan, then the city will not gain much or any property tax revenue from this increase in housing over the next 20 years. Finally, after this \$1.8 million state loan is paid off, the city, county, school and other taxing jurisdictions would see the benefits of increased property taxes from these new homes, which was the point. Just as important, is there a deadline for new home construction by the developers using these funds to ensure the city can pay off this state loan? What happens if they don't build what has been planned? That happens a lot in the real world.

Furthermore, the city paying nearly 80 percent of Russ Young's \$940,000 development costs has the appearance of a sweetheart

deal. There's only 17 single-family homes lined up immediately, with hopes for 56 more in the future. Paying 53 percent of Mahogany Ridge Properties' \$1.4 million development costs also has the appearance of a sweetheart deal, with only 12 single- or multi-family units planned for the first phase. Lastly, the city will pay \$300,000 of the development costs for Holmstrom Heights, which will be used for four new homes, working out to \$75,000 per home. Is that also a sweetheart deal? In the real business world, the city would claim some type of return from the developers for its investment, not just give away money — even if it came from the state.

**Richard Hanners**  
*John Day*

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