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Katie Wall.....Editor

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**A perspective on
Measure 23**

To the Editor:

Measure 23 worries me. Rather than helping Oregon's health care problems, Measure 23 could very well make them worse. In addition, it would cost billions of dollars in new taxes, seriously damaging the state's struggling economy and threatening the funding needed to keep our schools from even deeper budget cuts.

I'm a nurse manager for a group of long-term care facilities. I'm also the mother of a school age child. I know health care costs are squeezing Oregonians - including many seniors. I'm also painfully aware of just how damaging the current state budget crisis has been to our schools. What we need are balanced, affordable solutions, not unworkable, over-priced ideas like Measure 23.

Measure 23 would create a board of 15 elected and appointed officials with unprecedented authority to raise taxes, borrow money and ration health care - all without voter approval. It could nearly double Oregon's top personal income tax rate, from 9 percent to 17 percent, and individual Oregonians' income tax bills could rise as much as \$25,000 per year.

On top of that, the board would have the power to hit employers with a huge payroll tax up to 11.5 percent of employee wages per year! That kind of multi-billion-dollar tax increase will result in huge job losses as small businesses like ours, burdened with the added costs, are forced to leave the state or close their doors. That's the last thing Oregon's economy needs right now.

Rather than taking a reasonable approach and targeting scarce taxpayer funds to meet the needs of the uninsured, Measure 23 promises wide open "free healthcare" to all. It covers everything - and everyone, including people from other states who move here to get free health care services.

It's costly and complicated, and I don't like the idea of 15 state-salaried bureaucrats having the power to raise my taxes and ration my health care.

The simple fact is, Oregon can't afford Measure 23. As a mother and a nurse, I urge you to join me in voting NO on 23.

(s) Deana Altman-Nelson
Registered Nurse
Salem

**Changing support,
changing parties**

To the editor:

This is a very hard letter to write but after all the political events of the last ten years and listening to the current crop of Democratic politicians I want to apologize to all my friends in Morrow County for ever supporting the Democratic party. My only excuse is that my family

was long time Democrats when the party was the party of conservative farmers and working men. My father taught me something way back in 1946 when I asked him how he was going to support the democratic candidate for governor. To my amazement he said that he was going to vote for Doug McKay, the Republican. He said, "I know them both and McKay is an honest man who will do his best for Oregon, So and so is just an old Democratic hack.

Those words came back to me when I was visiting an old democrat friend a couple of weeks ago. Some years ago he had been a Kulongoski supporter. He told me that he had visited with the candidate last summer and was very disappointed. "He's now just another old tired political hack and I'm going to support Mannix" I was rather surprised but was coming to the same conclusion. Mr. Kulongoski would just be a replay of the disasters we've had in office with Roberts and Kitzhauber. On the other hand Mr. Mannix knows that there is more to Oregon than the 15 corridors. The only objections that I can find for Mr. Mannix is that he does not believe in abortions or murder by doctors. In the former none of the proponents seem to want to say when life begins while the eminent professor from Princeton seems to feel that killing should be legal until the age of five. Some have said until birth but would defend plunging a scissor into the brains of a baby leaving the birth canal. I think that it is logical to believe that it is wrong to kill any one that has legal rights. As for doctors probably enough patients are killed by accident.

That brings us down to the Senate race. I don't agree with everything he has done, notably ANWAR, but in general he has voted for the rights of all Oregonians. He has fought for the Klamath farmers and voted for the new forest plan that will allow us to get the woods cleaned up and allow salvage of timber from the millions of burned acres. I can't believe that any one who has seen the depressed condition of our Oregon small towns that depend on farming and timber will vote for his opponent.

Now Larry I've said I'm sorry so please don't tease me about my friend, Senator Daschle' any more.

(s) Don McElligott
lone

**Church friend
encourages vote
for Scheeler**

To the Editor:

Are you as disgusted as I am with the inability of our state legislators to provide adequate funding for our schools and other vital state services? Are you concerned that special interest groups can influence and kill sound legislation which would benefit Oregon's children? If so, there is a bright burst of hope in the candidacy of Elizabeth

Letters to the Editor

Editor's note: Letters to the Editor must be signed. The Gazette-Times will not publish unsigned letters. Please include your address and phone number on all letters for use by the G-T office. The G-T reserves the right to edit. The G-T is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. (Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under "Card of Thanks" at a cost of \$7.)

**Scheeler for District 57
Representative.**

I became acquainted with Elizabeth and her family when they first began attending our church nine years ago. They became members of the church and have served faithfully filling leadership roles.

Elizabeth volunteered to serve in her daughter's classrooms and seven years later is still serving. Elizabeth has served on the Pendleton School District Budget Committee and is currently a school board member.

Elizabeth understands the correlation between good schools and a thriving economy. She knows that our schools and Colleges must turn out qualified candidates to fill the positions in Oregon's job market or those jobs will go elsewhere.

A vote for Elizabeth Scheeler is a vote for dedication to see our state's children receive a quality education. It is also a vote for the courage to reject special interests and make tough decisions to provide adequate funding for all state services. And lastly it is a vote for integrity which appears to be sadly lacking in Salem today.

I urge your support for Elizabeth Scheeler on Nov. 5.

(s) Val Bates
Pendleton

**Some view
Scheeler as a
bright spot in
politics**

To the Editor:

Every once in a while we are privileged to feel the warmth of a bright spot on an otherwise sober and somber horizon. Elizabeth Scheeler, candidate for representative of District 57, is one of those political bright spots. She is a wife, a mother, a committed community leader including service on the Pendleton School District Board of Directors, and a very talented and knowledgeable lady.

She committed to running for office in order to try to help stop the downward slide of Oregon's education system. She knows first hand how underfunded our schools are and how our quality education system is sinking into the morass of mediocrity. Elizabeth also knows that Eastern Oregon has needs and priorities that are very different from the western side of the state. When Elizabeth goes to Salem, she will not be voting the party line just because it is the "party line." She will be looking at the issues and deciding to vote in a way that best serves her district. How refreshing that would be if our other legislators would put their constituents first and contributors and political loyalty second. We might not be in this mess. Please vote for Elizabeth Scheeler if you want a refreshing and committed representative for District 57.

(s) Rusty Fisher
Pendleton

**Scheeler running
for District 57
representative**

To the Editor:

Elizabeth Scheeler is running for District 57 House of Representatives position. I have had the opportunity to interact with Elizabeth on numerous occasions during the course of her campaign. I have been very impressed by her grassroots approach to running for office. She has been very proactive and spent many hours meeting with teachers and community members to hear what they have

to say about a variety of issues. Elizabeth is an excellent communicator and a good listener.

Currently Oregon is 45th in overall per capita taxes in the nation. However, Oregon depends more on one tax source than any other, that being the income tax. This is where the rub comes in! In Oregon, 74 percent of state tax collections are from (you guessed it) income taxes. Currently, our Oregon economy is in the dumpster and state revenues are in a free fall due to a huge shortfall in anticipated income taxes. After five special sessions of the Oregon Legislature, the central problem remains. Funding streams tied to the income tax will always be and always have been cyclical with highs and lows. In contrast, schools, state police and services to the elderly require a dependable source of state revenue. For example, twenty-five children in a first grade classroom need one teacher to teach them and this does not change because the economy is bad.

Elizabeth Scheeler is beholden to no special interest groups. She is a member of the Pendleton School Board and a volunteer in the schools. She has a history of public service for the sake of community improvement and not self-promotion. Elizabeth is honest, sincere and genuinely interested in solving the financial dilemma that besets our great state. Elizabeth is precisely the kind of person eastern Oregonians need in the Oregon House of Representatives.

(s) Larry Glaze
LaGrande

**Scheeler is a
woman who gets
things done**

To the Editor:

The first time I worked with Elizabeth Scheeler, one thing struck me: This woman gets things done.

I met Elizabeth during a long, intense 5-day community volunteer project. By the time day-two rolled around, it was easy to tell the talkers from the doers. Elizabeth Scheeler is definitely a doer.

Since that time, I have had the opportunity to not only work with Elizabeth, but to watch her work. She is a good listener, intelligent, well spoken and thoughtful. She does her homework before making a decision.

Her opponent sometimes characterizes her as a well-meaning, one-issue candidate. Though I can't argue against the fact that her concern about inadequate school funding probably pushed her into entering this race. I can tell you that she is also well-versed on issues ranging from Oregon's environment to its economy.

Oregonians have placed education at the top of their priority list. Elizabeth is committed to providing a quality education for Oregon's children. Elizabeth is a member of the Pendleton School Board. She is well aware of the painful cuts that rural Oregon schools have suffered and the even deeper cuts that will result if a solution to the funding crisis is not found soon.

Her opponent had a 67 percent voting record on school issues during the regular session. His record was closer to 0 percent during the special sessions. He says he cares about rural schools.

Talking has led the state of Oregon to five special sessions. Talking has led this state to the doorstep of financial crisis. Talking has gotten us nowhere.

**Supporters call
Nelson a man who
says what he
means**

To the Editor:

Jim Nelson has shown his willingness to invest in the Town of Lexington as a businessman and as a citizen. His efforts to clean up and beautify his property, the adjoining property, and town property is representative of his "let's do and not just talk about it" mentality. Jim has paid out of his own pocket to improve the Town of Lexington's property and his neighbors' property because he felt it was what was best. He purchased equipment so that the town could use it during its water project period. When others in town were complaining about items lying around after the water project, Jim was the one who took action instead of complaining. Jim Nelson is a man who is straightforward with the facts and does not use deception. With Mr. Nelson you will get a man who says what he means and means what he says.

Being a person of action Jim picked up the ball and continued the fundraisers that had been started in the past. He helped form the Lexington Fire Fund when the Auxiliary disbanded. An accountant is being used to track the use of the money for financial integrity. You can be assured that the money that is raised and donated will be used for the Lexington Fire Department. The wishes of the fire fund committee will be followed, as will the articles of incorporation.

Mr. Nelson has shown over the years that he is concerned about the Town of Lexington and he continues to attend council meetings so he can stay current with issues and actions affecting the town. I have watched and worked with both candidates, but I must conclude that a vote for Mr. Jim Nelson is a positive vote for the Town of Lexington.

(s) Glenn Anderson
Lexington

**Former
representative
backs Smith**

To the Editor:

We are pleased to support Representative Greg Smith in his effort to seek reelection to the Oregon House of Representatives. Morrow County has been well served by this tireless advocate of Eastern Oregon. Let us share with you just a few things Greg did for us:

During the 2001 Legislative Session, Greg took legislative leadership to task on reductions to the Medicaid Upper Limit Reimbursement Rate, which was vital to our local pharmacy in its ability to serve Morrow County's most needy citizens. This was also important legislation for our new assisted living facility. Senior citizens greatly depended upon this rate to be maintained.

Greg stabilized our county fairs with reliable, long term funding. The Oregon Fairs Association named him their Grand Champion Legislator for his hard work.

Greg brought home \$40,000 to the Oregon Trail Library District to enhance literacy in our county.

Greg fought hard to insure \$1.2 million to rural Oregon safety net clinics, of which Morrow County has three. For his leadership on this issue, the Oregon Rural Health Care Association named him their Outstanding Freshman Legislator of the Year.

Greg was one of a handful of pro-education legislators that voted "yes" for \$5.2 billion for our children's education. That was over \$500 million more than the previous biennium.

Greg led the charge in keeping the State Accident Insurance Fund (SAIF) intact so

that our Main Street businesses would continue to have affordable worker's compensation insurance.

For our farmers, Greg was a strong "yes" vote on eliminating Oregon's inheritance tax, thereby allowing the family farm to pass from generation to generation without having to worry about the over-burdensome tax placed on their family.

We need Representative Greg Smith back in Salem to fight for what matters most to Morrow County. Please join us in sending a strong voice back to Salem.

(s) Representative
Raymond French (retired)
(s) Norma French
Heppner

**True rights are
balanced with
equal
responsibility**

To the Editor:

Children are by definition precious. They need responsible adults to help them gain maturity.

I read in the Heppner Gazette-Times that our court system has denied our State Senator Greg Smith the right to guide his own son away from criminal behavior.

Is this right?

A more serious question might be "what kind of mindset will form when all of the other 10 -14 year olds read that not even a powerful politician is allowed to dispense discipline?"

Children of that age have not yet worked out a social conscience, or fully discovered cause and effect. Are they equipped to evaluate that it was the divorced wife, someone for whom consuming love had turned to consuming hate that had accused the Senator? Could it be obvious, at that age, why this career damaging accusation was made and the adjudication was done within weeks of an important election?

These impressionable children are already suffering from the disadvantage of being repeatedly told that they have rights, and probably are without sufficient maturity to realize that true rights are balanced with equal responsibilities.

Might they begin to think that they can do any damn thing that they want, and that nobody can say nay? Perhaps not, at least not all of them.

However, there is a test. Question: how will they act when they believe that the figure of authority is so preoccupied that any misbehaving will go unnoticed?

In order to find out the truth, let those parents, educators, and politicians, who so freely proclaim the rights of children, to those children, be active in the testing. Let those prosecutors and judges who so freely charge abuse to those who wish only to have their children learn to act in a civilized way, help to conduct the test.

Let them drive a school bus for just one year.

Drivers are needed. It does not require much time, only a couple or three hours per day, four days per week.

Would any of the more liberal among us who have the power to pursue their agenda, test their theories and risk placing the back of their head into the prevailing atmosphere which they have created?

(s) F. Green White
Heppner

**American Legion and
Auxiliary to meet**

The American Legion and Auxiliary is scheduled to hold a meeting, Oct. 28, at the Methodist Church basement.

There will be a potluck beginning at 6:30 p.m. Reports will be given on the State Convention and other events.

All members and family welcome.