

Oregon Government is Costly



By Oregon State Senator Dennis Linthicum

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Our political elites mis-use economics. They use economic projections as sales, marketing and sloganeering tools. Their central planning and control efforts form an endless barrage of claims hoping for votes, then power, money and control. Think about clean energy, immigration, Measure 110, micro-electronic circuit or housing development and employment.

Are these examples sincere problem solving efforts or merely attempts to overtake the economy and grab money, power and control?

As always, when there is one political claim there is always another. But, what is the truth of the matter? Can any of these claims about solving problems and improving the lives of Oregonians be true?

Regardless, the state's collectivist marketeers get right to work.

The French economist Frédéric Bastiat described our problem in his 1850 essay, "That Which Is Seen, and That Which Is Not Seen." He wrote, "The bad economist pursues a small present good, which will be followed by a great evil to come, while the true economist pursues a great good to come, – at the risk of a small present evil."

The adjectives he uses are – bad verses true, instead of bad verses good. We have become accustomed to think in terms of moral categories like bad verses good. The lesson for us is,

we should strive for truth, then our moral compass will be set straight.

I suggest, our state's political quagmire would clear immediately, if we asked, "Is that true?"

For example, the open border policies have grown to allowing more than 300,000 migrants to cross illegally into the US monthly. Obviously, this is deliberate, but are we solving anything problems or are we just moving the problems around on a map and making them worse? The recently failed \$118 billion border security bill only had \$20 billion for US border security.

Does that sound like a solution, a marketing ploy, or magic?

When our political elites use falsehood to advance an idea, it's more than bad policy, it's bad economics. The border example, works well to illustrate this point. Has the influx of multiple millions of illegal immigrants provided any economic, practical, moral, life and livelihood benefits to the US or to the various countries of origin that lost these people? The claim is that we are saving lives but the administration is not advancing freedom, shutting-down socialist dogma or pressuring our other countries to adopt free-market economies.

How can we best help, by proving handouts or opportunities? Here or there? What's marketing and what is truth?

And, for all of our global concerns, why isn't anyone asking the truth questions about Cxvoid "science"?

Was social distancing was effective? Is there scientific evidence that face masks can stop a respiratory virus? Were Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT) performed to confirm asymptomatic transmission claims? Did plexiglass barriers, the constant washing of grocery counters, or disinfecting shopping carts handles provide any documentable benefits?

The scientific totalitarians will have trouble with each of these questions, as well as, accessing risks associated with the mRNA injections which are skirted or ignored daily.

Why is Oregon's political class unwilling to seek truth.

Remember, forty million Americans lost their jobs, and nearly 10 million of those are still unemployed. Income in America fell to such low levels that federal tax revenues decreased by more than 50 percent year over year by mid-year 2020.

Yet, the federal government cranked up the printing presses and distributed \$350 billion to states and local governments as part of the 2022 pandemic aid bill. Those monies have to be spent by this year's end or the feds will send their agents to take it back.

Why was this mandatory time frame part of the legislative package? It clearly wasn't designed for the slow, deliberative, and prudent considerations that would normally accompany prudent decision-making. Rather, the mandatory time-constraint was designed to generate a momentary statistical blip for propaganda purposes.

The story always reads better if the pols can claim, "all is well in our local economies." Complete tommyrot.

As in the earlier quote, "The bad economist pursues a small present good, which will be followed by a great evil to come..." and no one knows the long-term impacts on our horizon.

Remember, untold numbers of small businesses remain closed. Thousands of individuals, moms, dads, and family members lost their jobs, and these job losses will get muddled with the statistical averages from foreign nationals, undocumented immigrants or illegal aliens who are also looking for employment.

On a legislative note here in Oregon, let me touch on, SB

1508. This bill recently passed the Senate Floor, and will move to the House. It is a prime example of government intervention with unintended consequences.

This bill started as my attempt to curb run-away Insulin prices. However, I voted "NO" because the bill had grown less attractive after each edit.

For background, I am alive today because of multiple daily injections of insulin. I have been injecting insulin for more than 50-years, so, I fully understand the life and death nature of insulin. Especially, in terms of medical need, cost and availability.

Yet this bill illustrates government taking the easy-way out. Essentially, this is a legislative mandate limiting charges for insulin to just \$35 a vial, from insurance providers operating within the state.

Insulin prices are not driven by extravagant insurance co-pay fees. Insulin prices actually get generated at the manufacturing level, by supply and demand for source materials, research, development, technology, manufacturing and regulatory requirements. Unlike ice cream which experiences greater demand during the summer, insulin has a fairly constant demand curve.

Yet, a major price factor is law-fare – practices that protect big manufacturing dominance through endless trade secret and patent protections. Patent protection are are limited and expire for various insulin formulations but manufacturing techniques are typically protected by trade secret law without limit.

Demanding insurance providers squeeze other plan participants meet the difference directly helps patients but doesn't solve the problem. In other words, we only moved the problem from one spot on the map to another, as manufacturers enjoy continued market protection.

No doubt people appreciate the lower cost and affordability of this life-saving medication, but what is government accomplishing? The “unseen” never gets mentioned. How many unintended consequences cascade down the line when government steps in to solve any particular problem?

system by twisting some segment of our economy. Like minimum-wage laws, paid-leave laws, laws restricting housing, land-use or drug-use there is always a problem that government created which will fester until really hurts. Meanwhile, the politicians, bureaucrats, political donors and cronies get to skate happily along and everything looks good until the next catastrophe.

We can only succeed by empowering individuals. We slow down and curb the state’s bureaucratic enterprise at every turn. We must hold politicians accountable for their false projections and the deleterious impacts of their socialist policies. Truth must be our standard.

Only through free-markets, with clear determinations of truth and fallacy, can we will rebuild the American dream. Yes, even here in Oregon.

If we don’t stand for rural Oregon values, no one will...

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