



OPINION

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In Our View

BOEING ISN'T THE POINT

Admittedly, we've been had; now, how can we prevent the next corporate con?

It is, unfortunately, a matter of trying to close the door after the horse has left the barn. Last week, leaders of the two largest unions representing Boeing workers, along with state Rep. June Robinson, D-Everett, renewed calls for the Legislature to rethink the tax incentives it has provided to the aerospace giant. In 2013, lawmakers agreed to extend tax breaks that will save Boeing an estimated \$8.7 billion through 2040.

The deal was tied to Boeing's commitment to build the 777X at its Everett plant, and while the company apparently is following through with its end of the bargain, it has been shipping other jobs out of state. Since 2013, Boeing's workforce in Washington has dropped from about 83,000 to fewer than 80,000. "We feel strongly that the legislation passed two years ago doesn't go far enough to guarantee a level of jobs and a wage standard we believe should be required for aerospace tax incentives," said John Holden, president of Machinists District 75.

When it comes to the art of corporate tax breaks, Boeing is Picasso. As the McClatchy news service reported this year: "Boeing is the biggest winner of state and local tax incentives, receiving more than \$13 billion of them." That number comes from watchdog group Good Jobs First, with research director Phil Mattera saying, "Boeing is playing the subsidy game at all levels of government."

Union leaders would like the Legislature to revisit two bills Robinson introduced to no avail this year. One would tie tax breaks to jobs; the other would require aerospace companies to meet certain wage standards in order to be eligible for tax incentives.

All of which brings us back to the horse-and-barn analogy. Boeing officials are not about sit still if lawmakers try to scale back the deal, nor should they. A deal was negotiated, and Boeing is living up to the letter of that deal, if not the spirit. Although Boeing was founded in Seattle, it long ago abandoned any semblance of being a strong community partner as it has embraced a strategy of playing one state against another in the name of profit. That's how business works.

Meanwhile, the lesson is an expensive one for lawmakers. A year ago, Boeing announced it would move about 2,000 high-paying engineering jobs in its defense division out of the Seattle area by 2017. It followed that by adding 700 jobs in Missouri rather than Washington. As now-retired state Sen. Adam Kline, D-South Seattle, said: "This is the way Boeing thanked us. ... We've been had."

Not that Washington is the only state to be had by a major corporation. In 2012, the New York Times reported: "states, counties, and cities are giving up more than \$80 billion each year to companies. ... They rarely track how many jobs are created. Even where officials do track incentives, they acknowledge that it is impossible to know whether the jobs would have been created without the aid."

In other words, citizens in all states should expect more from their lawmakers. Politicians are quick to point to job numbers or suggest that they helped save or create a certain amount of employment opportunities, but they rarely delve into the underlying details. If lawmakers really want to make a difference in how Washington approaches corporate



Our Readers' Views

Attendance at council hearing urged

Clark County councilors were finishing revising the required comprehensive plan from 2007. The planning department, under the capable hands of Community Planning Director Oliver Orjiako, had the schedule arranged so that it could be done before the June deadline in order for the county to be eligible for state grants, which will give money for infrastructure and other essentials to keep our economy moving forward.

During the last year, a small group of landowners convinced Councilor David Madore that they wanted more from the update, so he devised Alternative 4, which evolved into a revised "Alternative 5." For the last several weeks, Madore has adjusted these alternatives, even changing the population forecast to suit the huge changes in his plans. This will throw the whole update process into chaos and the county will not be able to finish before the deadline. This is all for the benefit of a small group who want to subdivide their parcels and see a huge profit.

Councilor Tom Mielke will most likely vote, as usual, to support Madore's whims.

We, the taxpayers, will pay dearly for this disaster. The county will also suffer from loss of state grant funding, and the roads, schools, safety, water supply and quality will all be in jeopardy. Concerned taxpayers should testify at the 10 a.m. hearing on Nov. 24 where the councilors will choose which alternative to pursue.

Valerie Alexander
LA CENTER

Tests don't allow for differences

Common Core does not allow for the differences we all have in looking at a problem. When we do math, we

time that could be spent on hands-on projects using their new information and skills. Results could come from woodworking, art projects, drafting drawings for a house or fort, chipping arrowheads, and many other feel-good projects. Even outdoor and physical education time could be used to show measuring and observation skills.

Our teachers today are professionals, so why are they being used and treated as robots to administer the "leave no child behind" tests with poorly applied thinking?

Talk to engineers, architects, builders and designers and you will hear how they use their "toolboxes" wisely.

Doug Irons
VANCOUVER

Prepare for enemy on our territory

If anyone viewed the press conference on Nov. 16 in Turkey, our so-called president was just his arrogant and defiant self. Instead of getting right into the Paris massacre by terrorist's radical idiots, he took two minutes to speak about climate change. The questions from the press were very pointed and intelligent, concerning his strategy about the terrorists. Instead of answering the questions, he went into a lecture about the differences of religions. How lame is that. Europe considered him as a joke.

And now Hillary Clinton, the clone of Obama, is making some ridiculous statements concerning how to deal with the terrorists that, of course, make no sense. Hillary was a failure as senator and a miserable failure of secretary of state. And people still think she will be Queen.

So, on a final comment, Democrats do not care until the enemy is in their own backyard. And believe it, under our present defense policy, it will happen.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Include name, address and daytime phone number for verification; only the name and hometown will be published. Email is preferred.

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became a focal point of the nomination race." For Republican candidates attempting to make political hay from an atrocity as occurred in Paris (rather than publicly offering their condolences for, and support to, the French people) is beyond loathsome: It makes one sick.

In addition, Donald Trump, unthinking, boorish and loud-mouthed as ever, thought that "a much, much different situation" would have resulted had the victims been armed with guns; thus taunting and insulting these hapless victims and implying that they should have known better.

John Van Son
VANCOUVER

Conservative thoughts refreshing

I spoke to a student from WSU a few days ago and discovered something very encouraging. A teacher there actually used a clip from Rush Limbaugh to make a humorous point about Hillary Clinton. The class had been discussing communication skills and how Hillary was not able to hide her knowledge of the true nature of the Benghazi attack.