

Time for Tallahassee to bet on our children and protect them with lottery: your say

May 14, 2018

Good bet

Now that the glaring issue of funding school security and additional school resource officers both locally and throughout Florida has surfaced, perhaps the time has come to follow both common sense and good business practices. Not all is as complicated as it seems. The Florida Lottery is the “Golden Ticket” as it relates to such funding.

If you work backward, where would Florida’s education system be without the Florida Lottery? Most likely, every school in Florida would most likely have been shut down years ago.

One needs to understand that the Lottery was never intended to “fund” the state’s education system, but was instead supposed to greatly supplement and enhance the system, thus making it progressively better over time. Had that actually been the case, schools throughout Florida would have little or no problems meeting their budgets or anything else. Unfortunately, it appears these monies were removed from the system through the back door as quickly as they came in through the front door.

Time for those in Tallahassee to step up and finally put the Lottery to work for our schools, for our young people, just as was intended from the start. This would more than take care of the security issues we are facing, both long-term and permanent.

However, Tallahassee will likely “scratch-off” such a approach as when it comes to government and money, one will always find a way to consume the other.

Robert Wagner, Cape Coral

Deal breaker

The news that Trump has pulled out of our Iran agreement certainly doesn't come as a surprise.

This is consistent with his adult lifetime track record of breaking deals not living up to agreements through his multiple bankruptcies, being fined \$25 million for swindling students through his "Trump University, consistent refusal to pay contractors in full after accepting their work, etc.

If only his bluster was matched by thoughtful, incisive analysis combined with a bit of humility, Trump could master his self-indulgent impulses. Unfortunately for us, this simply is beyond his grasp along with integrity, honesty and character.

In short his true "Art of the Deal" is simply breaking the deal.

James Keough, Cape Coral

Cheaper rides

Tax dollars subsidize 70 percent of public transit and Amtrak operating costs and 100 percent of the capital costs. Nationally, a higher percentage of people who earn more than \$75,000 a year take transit, more than any other income class. Even with subsidies, ridership has decline 4.4 percent from 2014 to 2016.

People's transportation methods are changing. A recent CATO Institute study indicates a growing use of ride-calling services like Uber, Lynx etc. It is predicted that within five years this service will also begin using driverless cars/buses. These modes don't require taxpayer subsidies, fares will be as competitive as transit, service more flexible and timely.

Communities who provide transit should start looking at less costly alternatives and prepare for this transition. It's estimated 75 percent of transit ridership loss went to ride-calling services. It's also a folly to think heavily subsidized rail service can be equally attractive and competitive with ride-calling services Transportation is a vital part of our economy. Communities need to focus on encouraging basic, cost-effective options that are sustainable and responsive to transportation needs.

Frank M. Mazur, Punta Gorda

Heritage matters

Why should we protect cultural heritage?

Societies have long sought to protect and preserve their cultural heritage, for reasons ranging from education to historical research to the desire to reinforce a sense of identity.

In times of war and conflict, cultural identity and cultural heritage become all the more important. Buildings, monuments and symbols of culture that speak of shared roots acquire an increased significance. Accordingly, they can become targets of violent and oppressive action that seeks to destroy the symbols valued by enemies or the iconography associated with alternative faiths and traditions.

Kirby Smith, Fort Myers

Authoritarian rule

This president, unlike any before him, has borrowed the tactics of authoritarians like Russian President Vladimir Putin and Philippines President Dodrigo Duterte by regularly attacking our free press, denigrating our government's legislative and judicial branches and encouraging our law enforcement officers to rough up suspects.

This heinous type of cultural appropriation should be strongly condemned by anyone who believes in our country's democratic values.

Doris Brown, Fort Myers