

## Letters to the editor

March 19, 2013

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RAUL LABRADOR

Congressman is not an effective leader

Don't give him a megaphone!

Congressman Labrador has found someone else to attack - Sen. Rubio. Labrador recently lamented that Rubio gets more megaphone time than he does for politicizing.

Doesn't the man ever take one step backward and take time for honest self-assessment?

Yes, he's a smooth speaker, and he revels at a crowd's applause. But these sessions are typically followed by continued examples of his lack of leadership.

Any devoted BSU football fan would be devastated if their football coach possessed similar leadership skills. Instead, Coach Petersen spent adequate time learning the basics and developing the head coaching skills before he stepped onto the gridiron.

Labrador should follow suit.

He should step away from the megaphone, quit kidding himself and others and spend time trying to learn leadership basics; yet his modus operandi is to slam politicians of both parties and their politics.

Idaho voters need someone with the skills to lead and someone who is willing to work with others to accomplish something positive for Idaho.

It is not necessary to know the intricacies of football to identify an effective coach.

Likewise, it isn't necessary to be a politician to recognize a politician who lacks leadership skills.

BEN SIMPSON, Boise

SPENDING CUTS

Big government is great threat to Idaho

I believe that the government failure to compromise on spending cuts, once again demonstrates the lack and willingness of elected officials to act upon the wishes and desires of the American public/taxpayers.

I don't know about you, but I'm pretty much fed up with the rhetoric that emanates from Washington, from the president on down. The current spending cuts and the "sky is falling" mentality are unnecessary.

Cuts can be made to the federal bureaucracy, which will not impact any Americans but will tone down big government, and I'm all for that. Cuts that will see Congress for example, stop giving themselves pay raises, and a president perhaps grounding himself to the White House instead of gallivanting across the nation in Air Force One.

We can tighten our borders, stifle health care, get out of Afghanistan and end the debates on ridiculous legislation, hell bent on telling us how to live our lives. As an Idahoan, I view the idea of big government as a threat to my well-being, something that those on the East Coast elect to live with.

Have you ever noticed that Barack never flies out to visit us here in the Gem State? Wonder why?

STEVE GRAVES, Meridian

DEPENDENCY

America's sad twist

I was recently reminded of Ted Sorensen's speech written for President Kennedy in which he said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

We seem to be on a track that says just the opposite. "Ask not what you can do for your country, but what your country can do for you."

Our history of self reliance seems to have fallen by the wayside and the reliance on large government has taken over so many of our expectations that I can't see it reversing itself in my lifetime. So sad.

ANN KRAMER, Boise

## GUNS

Purchase wasn't illegal

Referring to the Feb. 14 article in the Statesman about the gun stash seized from a Boise home, I have questions. Where did the illegal activity of shoplifting and burglary stop and, through the background checks, the legal purchase of guns begin?

Had this individual returned the stolen items and received gift cards with which he purchased 12 pairs of boots and shoes over the years, would they have lined the footwear up and taken pictures of the shoe stash? Theft and burglary was the crime; what he bought was not. If a gun can some way, even though irrelevant, be associated with a crime, I guess it makes the crime look more horrific.

HOWARD B. JENKINS, Eagle

Value of protection

Gun control, are you sure?

To the other 50 percent liberal/progressives out there. Are you really sure you want the 50 percent conservative/constitutionalists to not be able to protect you?

We feed, clothe, house and support your needs now with our taxes.

We also make sure you are protected from your naivete about personal safety. We are the proactive ones, not the reactive ones who come after the crime has been committed. Gun crimes have reduced significantly since concealed carry has passed in the majority of states.

"Bad" guys don't want to take the chance of getting shot. This protects us both unless you are advertising you are unarmed. Criminals don't follow the law so why would you want to give them the advantage? Be careful what you wish for because you just might get it and suffer the consequences.

The Second Amendment was not enacted to protect muzzleloaders any more than the First Amendment was enacted to protect town criers. The Founding Fathers could not know what technological advances like television, iPhones, Internet, semi-automatic weapons, et al., would be developed.

They just had the foresight to put in place the Bill of Rights to protect individual freedoms from tyranny.

CHUCK ROBINSON, Boise

#### PRAYER WARRIORS

Thank you, Dan Popkey, and the Idaho Statesman, for the article about the prayer warriors who are out in all kinds of weather trying to save lives. The price for each abortion is one human life. Beware the USA! Nations that kill their future generations won't last that long.

RITA M. DONOVAN, Boise

#### HEALTH INSURANCE

State-run exchange is the best route

Some groups like the Cato Institute, the Heritage Foundation and the Freedom Foundation want us to do nothing about choosing a state or federal health exchange. Doing nothing means we will have a federal exchange administered by some unknown bureaucrat from Washington, D.C.

This form of civil disobedience seldom works. Consider the "Whiskey Rebellion" of 1791 when George Washington led 13,000 troops into western Pennsylvania because people refused to pay tax on wheat used to make whiskey. They subsequently paid the tax.

These groups have misinformation spreading around the state, saying there is no difference between a state and federal exchange, that by participating in a state exchange we lose control. This is absolutely not the case.

A state-based exchange will be administered by a 16-member board made up of Idaho citizens.

All meetings will be in public and completely transparent. This would not be the case with a federal exchange. This is why I voted for a state exchange on the Governor's Exchange Working Group.

By designing our own structure, having the exchange run by Idahoans will ensure accountability and flexibility to improve the exchange in the future. A state-based exchange is right for Idaho

DR. JOHN LIVINGSTON, Boise

## HEALTH CARE

Report explains why costs are high

Everyone should read Steve Brill's report on health care and why it costs so much. It is easy to read and explains a lot about where the high medical costs come from in this country. I had hoped we would see more of it in the national media, but have seen nothing so far.

The industry spends over three times as much on lobbying as on the entire military/industrial complex. Perhaps that is why we see no action on it. Hospitals should lose their non-profit status rather than building huge kingdoms on the backs of our citizens. Further, negotiations for durable medical equipment and drugs should be allowed. Tort reform needs to be considered, as well as allowing insurance to compete across state lines.

If the people want to take back some power, this is where to start. Contact your congressmen and ask for clarification and action. The impact of health care on our economy is great and needs to be addressed. Brill's report can be easily googled. Don't allow it to be ignored!

DEAN O. MUEHLBERG, Meridian

Ban the facility fee

The first step in reducing health care costs (Feb. 28, page A6) is for St Luke's to drop the \$231 "facility fee" it tacks on to every visit to one of its staff doctors.

PATRICIA RODRIGUEZ, Boise

DRUG VS. GUNS

Legislators' hypocrisy

So the Idaho Legislature recently on one hand was working on a bill that condemns Oregon and Washington for passing laws legalizing marijuana and wants to ask the federal government to enforce federal drug laws on them. And then at the same time, they want to pass laws criminalizing anyone who helps the federal government enforce federal gun laws in the state of Idaho.

What is that smell? Is it the stench of stupid hypocrisy? Come on, you can surely do better.