

Tampa Bay Times

May 20, 2012 Sunday

Letters to the Editor

1045 words

What would Paul Ryan do?

A 20-year-old Medicaid recipient gets pregnant with a baby diagnosed with Trisomy 18, a disease "incompatible with human life." Doctors "suggest" abortion, but the mother decides to have the baby. Result: Tens of thousands of taxpayer dollars to keep the baby alive.

For the few who are surviving with this disease (1 in 10 make it past the first year), their quality of life is beyond belief. Now, what would Paul Ryan and those who support his vision for America (most Republicans and tea partiers) say about this situation if you pinned them down? As believers in a mind-set that says abortion is murder, they would have to support the mother's decision to have the baby. However, if they were to have their way and could slash and gut the safety nets like Medicaid and many other social programs, there would be no money to keep the baby alive after birth. What a quandary. What would Jesus do?

Glenn Poskocil, Tampa

Story opens eyes

Thank you for giving this important story such prominent placement. Perhaps it will give other expectant mothers carrying a child with a fatal diagnosis another perspective other than termination. Our daughter also chose to carry after receiving the diagnosis of Trisomy 18 for our third grandchild almost 10 years ago. Marie Cooper Zehnder was born alive and was with us for three precious hours. About 25 or 30 family members and friends were there to share in Marie's short life. It was a time none of us will ever forget.

Paul and Carolyn Cooper, St. Petersburg

Compatible with life

There are hundreds of Trisomy 18 survivors. There are groups on Facebook with over 700 families of Trisomy 18, 13 and others. Trisomy 18 is not incompatible with life. Also the Trisomy 18 foundation you refer to is a legacy page group for children who have passed on.

Alex Hauber, president, Trisomy Advocacy Group, Springtown, Texas

Bipartisanship? Whatever

May 13, Adam C. Smith column

Blame the media, too

I applaud the column by Adam Smith on the lack of bipartisanship in the United States. As he pointed out, confrontation is the norm in Washington, and it is keeping the country from dealing with the critical issues of the day. In my view, part of the blame for this resides with the media. Voters, for the most part, get their views on issues from print and electronic media that are as biased and myopic as the legislators in D.C. Examples of this are CNN and Fox as well as a number of prominent newspapers around the country. Editors around the country should take heed for they are a part of the problem.

Thomas W. Klein, Tampa

Independents' day

The failure of bipartisanship has the American voter so disgusted that congressional approval is at 15 percent. The "my way or the highway" approach to governing and the power of money are the problems. There is something that can be done: Form an Independent Party. It could be a group of people willing to run for office making two pledges: 1) Not to take money from lobbyists or to contact them. 2) To vote their conscience and the needs of their constituents rather than the directions of party leaders.

This would not work for presidential or Senate races as the need for money brings in handlers. Congressional elections are a different story. The president is the voice of the nation, the Senate is the voice of the states, but the House is the voice of the people.

John B. Mooney, Hudson

Low-budget higher ed

May 13, Diane Roberts column

Scott's bad math

Diane Roberts always inspire us to read, act and support our state, especially when education in Florida is at risk, and it certainly is now. Some state workers have been told to remember who is "the boss." Apparently Roberts has the courage to speak up to him. The governor's intolerance and ignorance of the value of education has caused our state to sink deeper and deeper into the doldrums of second-rate status. I'm not sure where he stands at times. First taking over \$1 billion from our schools, and then giving back some, does not constitute any solution. Nor does creating a new university without students, faculty and accreditation. Perhaps he needs a few lessons in the math he touts.

Lilyan V. Dayton, New Port Richey

Progressive Portlanders

Eric Greenbaum obviously believes whatever he is told. Randal O'Toole has been using outright lies and questionable facts for years. He works for the **Cato Institute**, an ultraconservative think tank!

Just ask anyone who has lived in Portland, including myself, what they think of MAX. Yes, when they started building it, they had cost overruns. Yet the people of Portland gladly paid a little more in property taxes to fund it. Another "fact" O'Toole has totally misrepresented! Likewise MAX has a daily ridership of over 153,000 passengers. This in an area with fewer people than the Tampa Bay area. The same people who believe O'Toole do not believe in global warming and would do away with the EPA. Thank God for cities like Portland that actually are progressive instead of regressive.

Kenneth Sturmer, Bayonet Point

For teachers, insults just keep coming

May 13, Bill Maxwell column

Trickle-down degradation

I applaud Bill Maxwell's article. It is refreshing to see someone who has a realistic understanding of what we teachers go through daily and how our morale is on a continuing downward spiral in Pinellas County. Not only are we disheartened by an intolerable evaluation system, but now the impending printing situation where a teacher will not even be able to print out a simple email without having to run to the one copier that is shared by everyone. When will we learn as a society that the more we denigrate the teacher, the more we hurt the child?

Angela Clifford, Largo

Drugs, debt bind laborers in slavery | May 13

Abhorrent treatment

I read the article about the town of Hastings with sadness and disgust. Why are we still allowing something so terrible to go on? We would condemn China or any other country if we suspected they were treating their people in this manner. Looks like we need to "pull the log" out of our own eye first. When Ronald Uzzle would not let the reporter look inside, it's time to close him down until he does.

Mary Sheppard, Riverview