

I completely oppose House Bill 3177's attempt to usurp the Governor's authority to defend the lives of Oregon residents. Having restaurants and gymnasiums open only part-time is an inconvenience, but nothing more.

As a decade-long producer of the Southern Oregon Kite Festival in Brookings, I saw that Festival disappear due to Covid-19. My wife saw the Time Out program close at the Chetco Activity Center, a program designed to care for the loved ones of family caregivers for a few hours every week so those caregivers might have some respite, a program for which she had volunteered for years.

However, sacrifices are necessary in extraordinary situations, which is how her parents and mine helped this country to prevail during World War II. The United States of America has already sustained more than one-and-a-half more deaths in one year from Covid-19 than it did from combat during the four years of WWII. Far less sacrifice is required to combat SARS-Cov-2 than was needed to defeat the Axis powers, so it seems irrational that there are supposedly responsible people whining about the inconvenience of not dining out or going to a gym whenever they want.

For the owners of those businesses, financial support from both Federal and State governments is vital and should be provided because their losses can be ameliorated without endangering other peoples' lives. The guidelines from national and international experts in epidemiology should not be ignored nor circumvented by unqualified persons, since keeping the death toll from SARS-Cov-2 infections to a minimum should be our primary concern. Money lost can be replaced; lives cannot.

HB 3177 is an attempt by a small cabal of malcontents to override the legally authorized decisions of a Governor elected ". . . by the people of the State of Oregon." The horrifying death statistics from Covid-19 in numerous States with Republican governors have shown that Oregon chose wisely. Oregon has, so far, endured the pandemic with fewer deaths per capita than 45 other States, decisively proving that ". . . the people of the State of Oregon" were correct in assigning this authority to our current Governor and it should not be usurped.