

# Opinions

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(Compliments from the Wright County Journal-Press as a service to our readers.)

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## NEWS FROM THE CAPITOL

Sen. Bruce Anderson

### Friends and neighbors,

Throughout the 2022 legislative session, my Senate Republican colleagues and I prioritized getting Minnesota back on track. We are all distinctly aware of the rise in crime in the Twin Cities and its suburbs, the effect the pandemic has had on our children's education, and the impact the climbing inflation rates are having on family budgets.

To address this, we passed key legislation out of the Senate that focused on providing tax relief, support for public safety and law enforcement, investments in student-first education proposals, and resources to stabilize our struggling long-term care facilities.

Our "Right Track" agenda would have helped keep our communities safe by providing vital support to law enforcement officers and putting into law important 'tough on crime' policies. It also included Minnesota's Biggest Tax Cut Ever! that cut the lowest income tax rate nearly in half and fully repealed the tax on Social Security benefits - an issue I repeatedly hear from members of our community on. Finally, the Parent's Bill of Rights and funding for literacy would have brought more transparency and accountability in schools, while reversing Minnesota's declining literacy rates with proven, scientific methods of instruction.

This session mainly focused on these pressing topics, but the critical staffing shortages facing nursing homes and long-term care centers hit a peak that also demanded the Legislature's attention. The Senate Republican nursing home rescue package, therefore, would have provided much-needed funding for staff, recruitment, and training.

However, the session closed without the passage of these major bills. Even though the bills were passed by the Republican Majority in the Senate, the DFL Majority in the House still needed to pass these pieces of legislation for them to be sent to the governor and signed into law. For this reason, the bills were sent to conference committee to work out the differences because the House did not accept the Senate's language. Senate Republicans continuously provided offers that met the terms of the leadership agreement announced on May 16, 2022. Our proposals were always within the set budget, dropped controversial policy, and posted for public review.

This can be sharply contrasted with the deficient offers sent by the DFL Majority in the House that were outside the budget target and contained new, controversial policy items. Even worse, in the last 48 hours of session to pass bills, the governor interfered with the Senate-House agreement on State Government, which effectively killed the bill.

The only way now for these bills to become law is for Governor Tim Walz to call a special session for the Legislature to finalize agreements on these pieces

of legislation.

Nevertheless, the session still saw several significant bipartisan success stories. The Minnesota Legislature passed legislation to repay and refill the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund and provide frontline worker bonus checks. We also successfully signed into law a reinsurance extension to allow insurance rates in the individual market to remain stable for Minnesota families. Further, the Legislature passed a budget bill for veterans including funding for three vets' homes and bonuses for veterans in the War on Terror. This makes critical investments in Veterans services and will offer great assistance to brave men and women who served our nation.

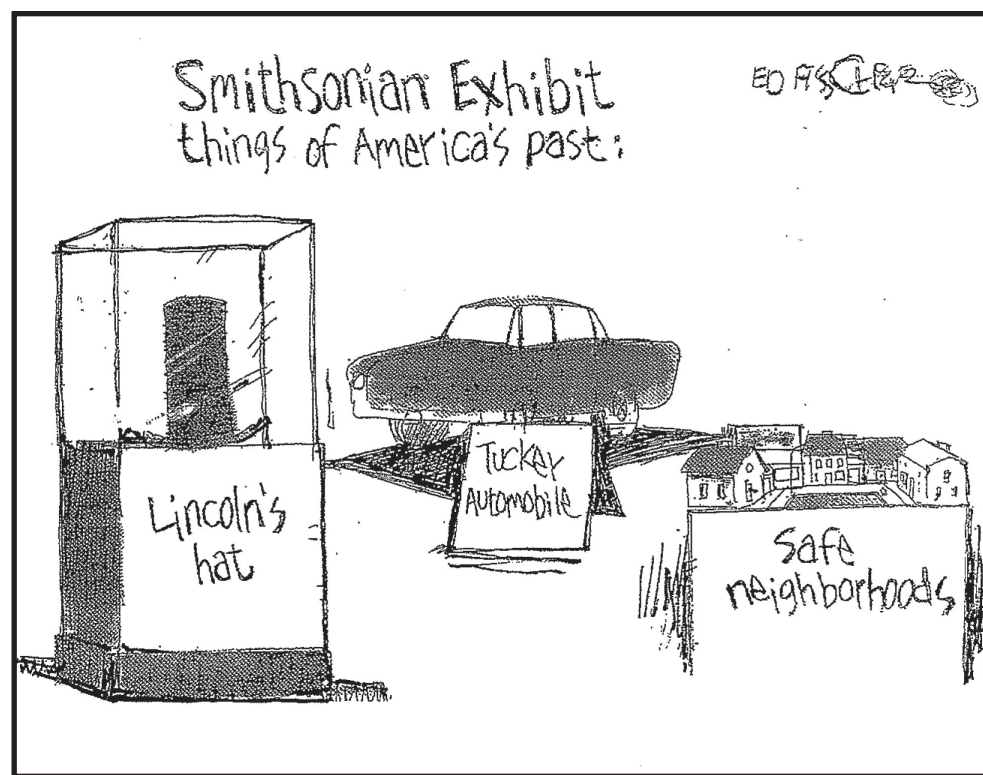
Additionally, the final day of the session included the passage of a significant agriculture, broadband, and drought relief bill. This legislation works to expand broadband funding, provide relief to farmers still struggling from the effects of last year's historic drought, and addresses urgent concerns in our agriculture sector.

A highlight includes \$210 million, the bulk of which comes from federal funds, to improve Minnesota broadband access across

the state. This package also includes \$1.5 million for the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory at the University of Minnesota to purchase equipment to test for Avian Influenza, African Swine Fever, Chronic Wasting Disease, and other animal diseases. The bill also includes \$3 million for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Emergency Account with funding going to animal disease testing and response.

I am proud to have supported these meaningful policies, and I remain committed to addressing the issues most important to Minnesota and our local communities.

I want to hear from you, my constituents, on issues that are important to you. Please feel free to reach out to my office with any concerns or ideas you may have. As session moves forward, I will keep your thoughts and concerns in mind as legislation comes before me. You can contact my office at [sen.bruce.anderson@senate.mn](mailto:sen.bruce.anderson@senate.mn) or 651-296-5981.



## Vojtech Voice

By Emily Vojtech



### Mass shootings: Time for real solutions

Another tragic school shooting has struck our country. On Tuesday, May 24, an 18-year-old named Rolando Ramos fatally shot nineteen elementary school students, two teachers, and wounded over ten others at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas.

What is absolutely disgusting to me, and frankly, getting old, is how quickly both the Democratic and Republican party make this a political debate. It's not appropriate, it's not professional, and politics frankly don't belong in the conversation about the tragic event.

Political affiliation needs to be put aside if our country truly wants to find a solution to the insane amount of mass shootings. These two parties need to be able to do their jobs and work together to find solutions that work. It seems like common sense to me to work together, not against each other during times like these.

To elaborate, it's not all people or politicians who make this a political issue. Part of the problem as well is the way the mainstream media portrays all of this. At times, when watching the news, it almost seems divisive, unfortunately. At times like this, we cannot be divided as a country. We need to come together. Solutions shouldn't be presented as "the liberal's solution is..." or "the conservative's solution is..." how about the American solution? The conversation often strays away from what is important, which is the safety of children in this country. It's not constructive, and clearly it has not worked over the decades that these mass shootings have occurred.

The song "Youth of Nation" by P.O.D. has been shared all over social me-

dia after the tragic event in Uvalde. The song was released in 2001, and still applies today. I remember hearing this song as an elementary student, not knowing the true meaning behind it.

Lyrics from the song include: "But who knew that this day wasn't like the rest. Instead of taking a test, I took two to the chest" later in the song (talking about the shooter): "Maybe this kid was reaching out for love, or maybe for a moment he forgot who he was. Or maybe this kid just wanted to be hugged. Whatever it was, I know it's because we are, we are the youth of a nation."

From the time I was in elementary school to now, as a 27-year-old adult, school shootings have been occurring at an alarming rate, and I am mad. Mad that so many kids just trying to go to school must live in fear.

As someone who has worked in schools and coached for years, I have noticed varying security measures between different schools. It's alarming that at some schools just about anyone can get in, especially when there are others that have very tight security measures in place. Many schools lock all doors except the main entrance. At the main entrance, many times visitors can get in one set of doors, to be in a lobby area where there is a locked set of doors and security, or staff must approve to let you in. Shouldn't all schools strive for tight security for many reasons?

It's time for real solutions, real conversations, and real results. It's time to come together and focus on what is important. I think most of us are tired of this and need to see our country's leaders act now.

crime is 2 years or more so the courts have no choice but to release violent criminals to offend over and over again. Back when I was in civics class, it was expected that "We the People" were to have a speedy trail, that protected both the accused and the general population. We have witnessed the attacks on our Supreme Court Judges and soon to follow will be our personal and religious rights. What we have now is failure of government.

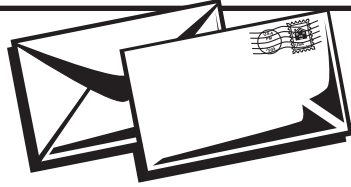
I could go on much lon-

ger, but there is limited time and space to list the failures of the Biden Presidency. There is now a new branch of government called the "Disinformation Governance Board" which will determine if information we receive is real and appropriate. This sounds like censorship and both Stalin and Marx would be proud of that institution. "We the People" need to

## Letters

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## Letters to the Editor



(Editor's Note: Sending your letter to us by email speeds up our production work because we spend less time typesetting. Whenever possible, please send letters to the editor by email to [editor@thedrummer.com](mailto:editor@thedrummer.com) or ads@thedrummer.com, attention Tom or Emily. Please include address and daytime phone number. Thank you.)

### To The Editor

I, like most Americans and many Democrats, are of the opinion that the Biden Administration is a complete failure. As I look at our country today I hardly recognize it from just a few years ago when gas at local stations was under \$2, inflation was around 2%, our military was strong, our borders were secure, our economy was strong, the stock market was reaching all time highs, people's spirits were high, the news cycles were not filled with mass shootings, car jackings and violent crimes perpetrated against law abiding citizens as they went about daily business.

What happened? Joe Biden's presidency happened. As soon as he took office he shut down the Keystone pipeline, stopped construction on "the wall" securing our Southern border, took steps to cancel or eliminate oil drilling leases, supported the leftist call to "defund the police," set in motion all sorts of old and new regulations on businesses, spent trillions of dollars we don't have so he just started the printing presses to print more mon-

ey. Invited illegals from around the world to enter the United States through our Southern border without background vetting, screening or recording who they are. He has supported regulations to weaken our voting integrity and make plans to increase the taxes all Americans pay.

It was not long ago when gas was \$2, we had our Southern border nearly under control, our stores had full shelves of food products and baby formula, the United States produced more oil than it exported, instead of our President making trips to Venezuela, Russia and Iran to beg them to sell us oil to keep our economy running. These are countries that have vowed the destruction of our allies and our own stability and will use the revenue they receive for oil to achieve that destruction. I ask could there be anything more insane. We need oil to keep this, the largest economy in the world running. The pipe dream that wind and solar will ever be able to supply the energy needs that steel mills require or fuel in the tractors that cultivate our farms, or fuel the ships, trucks and trains that distribute goods to our factories and stores, or the petrol-industry that makes fertilizers, plastics even medications is just that a pipe dream. An economy of this size needs oil. We need to re-enforce our police, our justice system and mental health support. In many cities the back log to prosecute a violent

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## Letters to the Editor

We encourage letters to the editor about public matters. Please state your views briefly in your own words. Letters must be signed by the writer and include the legible name, address and daytime phone number of the writer. Only your name and town will normally be published. All letters are subject to editing for clarity, space and appropriateness of content. We reserve the right to refuse publication of any letter. Address letter as follows: Letters to editor, Wright County Journal-Press, P.O. Box 159, Buffalo, MN 55313.

During political election campaigns, we prefer to reserve space in the letters column primarily for our readers and not necessarily for the candidates or campaign committees. We ask that candidates and people who are active on their committees, please identify themselves when submitting material during a campaign. We will consider publishing that material elsewhere on the Opinion Pages. This is not a perfect system. Sometimes candidates feel entitled to respond within the letters column to what they see as serious false charges or significant factual errors made against them in someone's earlier letter. This newspaper tries to be fair in those cases. Do not wait until election eve to raise a serious new issue, when insufficient time remains for a reply.

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