

# The Coos Dialogue

A submission-based magazine for liberals and their allies.  
**Fight polarization. Speak. Write. Read.**

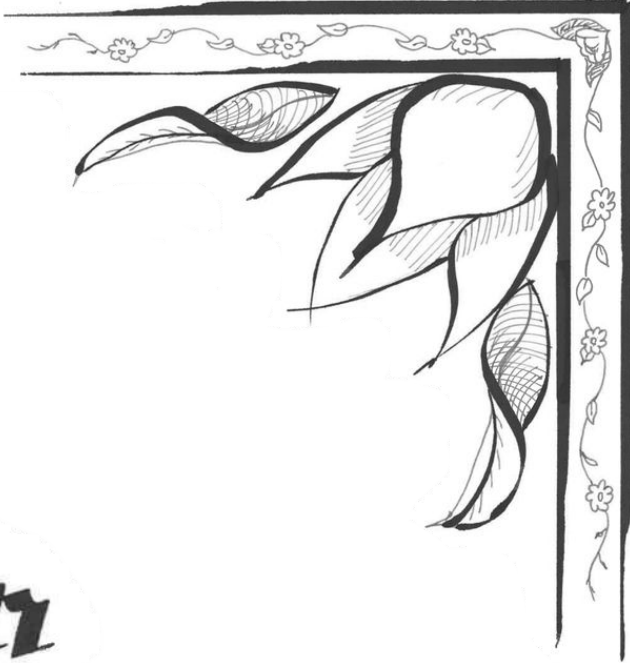
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**[coosdialogue.com](http://coosdialogue.com)**

Edition 6, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026



## CLEARING THE WAY FOR A BETTER COOS COUNTY

**IN THIS ISSUE:** *the Grand Bargain*, Kotek, the Neighborhood  
Leader Program, corporate campaign money, and **more**



# The Purpose of this Publication

From the Editor's desk

Increasing polarization<sup>1</sup> has led our government to stop working for us the way that it's designed to work. Without the ability to agree on basic facts, our government loses its ability to make decisions— from Congress to City Council, polarized beliefs about reality keep us trapped in a permanent stalemate. Radicalism took over the broad majority of the political right and led to the degradation of the White House and an onslaught of assaults against our Constitution. Radicalism is beginning to rear its ugly head in the farthest corners of the left (not to be confused with social democrats, or even democratic socialists), and new forms of authoritarianism loom on the horizon. Radicals are people who don't just want society to change for the better; radicals reject the very principles that give our nation its identity— the principles of liberalism.

**Since its invention, liberalism has been made up of four key beliefs:**

1. people should live their own lives as they see fit (*individualism* ),
2. all people are equal (*egalitarianism* ),
3. rights, equality, and freedom belong to every person, no matter who they are (*universalism* ),
4. society can and should be constantly improved (*meliorism* ).<sup>2</sup>

Discourse has moved away from these foundational principles, and average Americans are spending increasing amounts of time on social media,<sup>3</sup> interacting more and more with the world through screens rather than face-to-face. This puts us all in danger of beginning to think that reality is exactly as our phone depicts it.

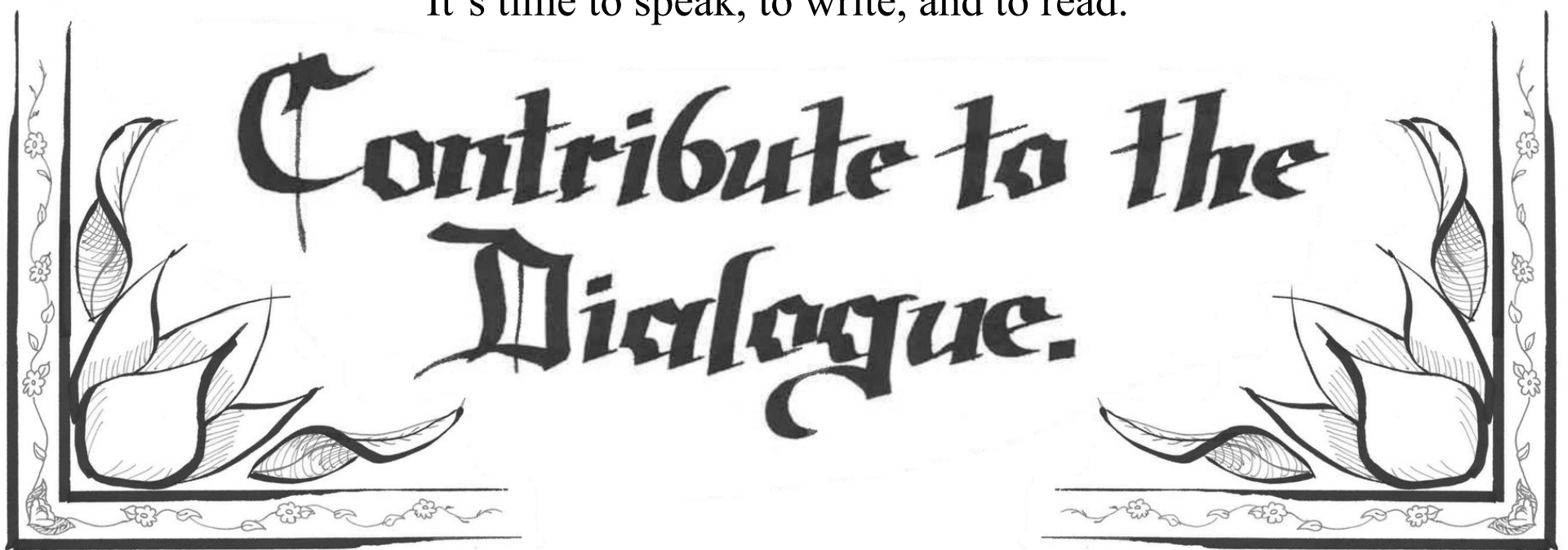
Consciously, we know reality is more nuanced than social media depicts, but algorithms work hard to make sure that we only see what confirms our beliefs about the world or about our political enemies. Our subconscious assumptions about reality are being deliberately polarized for corporate screentime engagement metrics.

Hence, *the Dialogue* returns to print with the express goal of inviting the community to slow down, to engage in good faith with their neighbors' beliefs, and to wrestle with the facts of life as we live it here in Coos County, Oregon. Editorial staff has agreed to accept in-kind donations of paper and ink from the Coos County Democratic Party, not because the Dems have anything to say to Coos County, but because **liberals of all kinds should be telling the Democrats what to do** with all their existing political infrastructure. This publication maintains journalistic independence from the Coos County Democratic Party, and will gladly print articles both critical and laudatory of the Coos Dems. For today, this publication lauds the Coos Dems not only for supplying the paper and ink this magazine is printed on, but also for understanding that it's time for them to listen more closely to the voices willing to speak up in Coos County.

Liberalism is a very broad political philosophy. It reaches from Coos County Indivisible's meetings all the way to County Commissioner John Sweet's desk (whether he adopts the term or not). It is not exclusive to Democrats, and it is neither fully right nor fully left. It is the path back to working together to govern our county, our state, and our nation effectively, because it unites so many different groups of people under the beliefs that founded America.

It's time to fight polarization in Coos County.

It's time to speak, to write, and to read.





# The Grand Bargain

## ❧ What is the Grand Bargain? ❧

Since January of this year, the Center for Collaborative Democracy has been polling Americans of all ages, races, and political backgrounds to determine what policies appeal to the broad majority of our countrymen. Through this polling, CCD distilled seven key areas of concern and thirty-nine corresponding reforms— **all of which have over two-thirds of Americans' support.**<sup>1</sup> This project is known as *the Grand Bargain*, and it emerges in a key time in our political climate, reflecting the record number of voters who don't feel they can identify fully with either political party.

The Center for Collaborative Democracy finds that Americans overwhelmingly agree with the following key principles:

1. Our nation needs to focus on increasing upward economic mobility.
2. Schools should enable kids to reach their potential.
3. Healthcare should be effective and affordable.
4. Energy infrastructure should be reliable, affordable, and clean.
5. We need to get our debt under control.
6. Our tax code needs to be fairer and simpler.
7. Congress should be organized to solve Americans' problems.

Over the course of the next several months, the Coos Dems are preparing to engage the community in evaluating whether any of these proposed federal reforms can be adapted to make Coos County an even better place to live. Across seven community summits in January and February, the Coos Dems look forward to hearing from Coos County at large: which of the proposed reforms can be implemented here in Coos County and how they should be adapted to suit our needs? Following those

summits, the Precinct Committee Persons will vote to adopt the reforms selected by the community as the party's official political platform, making those reforms the guiding principles by which the Coos Dems endorse candidates and advocate for changes in our laws.

### ⚡ Possible Reforms for Economic Mobility ⚡

In this edition, we will focus on several of the proposed federal reforms in the key policy areas of economic mobility and k-12 education, starting with reform 1.b (as printed below), which suggests that the federal government **“reduce regulations that restrict construction of new affordable housing and infrastructure.”** This is already happening right here in Coos County, Oregon!

In 2024, Oregon's state legislature established the Housing Accountability and Production Office (HAPO),<sup>2</sup> which led the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) to award grants to the City of Coos Bay;<sup>3</sup> these grants are helping the Planning Commission and City Council review the city's housing codes and policies.<sup>4</sup> The goal of the audit is to **make sensible changes that remove barriers to the construction of new housing.** Some suggestions include the reduction of the minimum lot size for single family dwellings and the adjustment of some zoning codes to allow the construction of duplexes and triplexes (taking care not to congest street parking).

This audit is a solid effort on the part of Coos Bay to be in compliance with *House Bill 2138*, which declared a housing emergency at the request of the Governor.<sup>5</sup> The goal of this bill is to **lower the cost** of housing by making it easier to **increase the supply** of housing, and it requires local development codes to be in compliance with seven new directives by 2027:

1. to allow middle housing (duplexes, triplexes, etc) in more places,
2. to use clear and objective rules for housing,
3. to stop imposing unreasonable design requirements on middle housing,
4. to focus less on the traffic impact of middle housing,
5. to increase the development of affordable and accessible units
6. to make it easier to divide existing lots into separately owned parcels
7. and to reduce barriers to the construction of ADUs, manufactured homes, and other alternative forms of housing.

Citizens of Coos Bay interested in attending the next Planning Commission Work Session (the code audit is expected to fill most of the agenda for this meeting) can attend at 6pm on Tuesday, September 8th at City Hall, per the City's office. This publication looks forward to monitoring and reporting on each county municipality's efforts to be in compliance with this law, and welcomes submissions from community members on the topic.

Following are the *Grand Bargain* reforms relating to **economic mobility**:

- a. Create incentives for community colleges, employers, unions and other providers to constantly improve and expand programs that train workers for higher paying jobs, especially in fast-growing industries
- b. Reduce regulations that restrict construction of new affordable housing and infrastructure
- c. Support rural and low-income urban areas with education, training, universal broadband access, and investment incentives to promote entrepreneurship and job creation
- d. Establish an independent agency to evaluate how each Artificial Intelligence initiative is promoting overall progress for ordinary Americans, such as improvements in skills, health, jobs and job quality
- e. Expand earning subsidies for low-wage workers with children
- f. Support workers' rights to form, join and contribute to unions – and their rights not to
- g. Boost federal spending on basic research, and improve the pipeline from publicly funded research to commercialization



## ☛ Possible Reforms for K-12 Education ☛

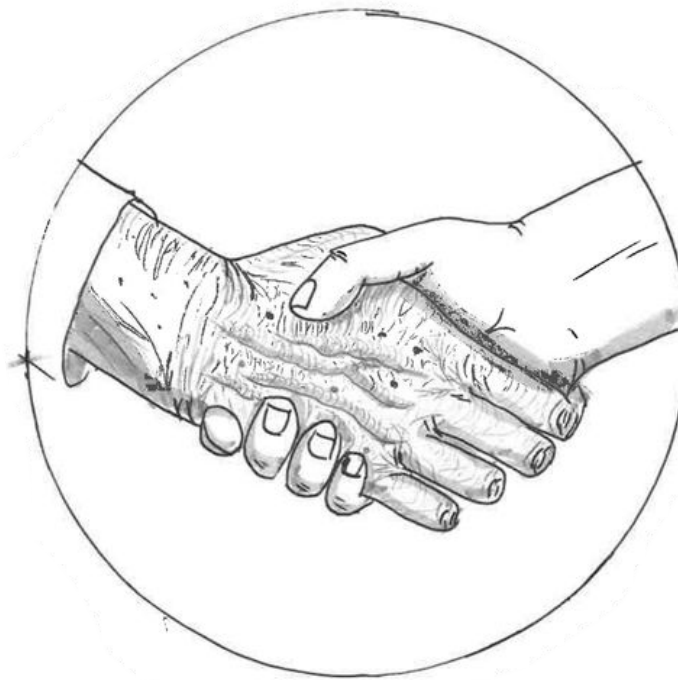
The second policy area of note for this edition references reform 2.e (as printed below), which suggests that the federal government should “**tailor instruction to students’ performance and provide tutoring as needed.**” This proposal is an appropriate remedy to Coos County’s markedly lower graduation rates than the statewide norms— Coos County’s graduation rate sits at 69%, while the state average is 83%.<sup>6</sup> There is, however, a complementary peculiarity about Coos County that might be the key. The percent of residents aged sixty-five and older sits at 29.5%, much higher than the statewide rate of 19.9%.<sup>7</sup> This publication seeks to start a conversation on the meeting of two key Coos County demographics: the retiree and the pupil.

A **volunteer tutoring program** would be a low-cost solution to our county’s abysmal graduation rate, investing in the future of our most forgotten students while honoring the character and wisdom of those who helped shape this community. Perhaps no one but those who saw the world for what it was before the corporate, algorithmic digitization of human life are better suited to reaching our most distracted young people with hope and reality. While our region may not be able to pay to staff a new wave of paraprofessionals, it may be the case that **volunteer stipends** would suffice to compensate volunteers who understand the true value of the time they offer. The *Dialogue* wants to know: would retirees be interested in mentoring our young citizens? Comment at [coosdialogue.com](http://coosdialogue.com).

Following are the *Grand Bargain* reforms relating to **k-12 education**:

- a. Revise educational goals and standards to include both academic and life skills, such as teamwork and resilience
- b. Reform teacher training and professional development to boost teachers’ performance
- c. Hold teachers and schools to account for students’ progress
- d. Significantly increase pay for more effective teachers
- e. Promote more instruction time, high expectations, frequent teacher feedback, tailoring instruction to students’ performance & tutoring as needed

- f. Develop programs to increase lower income parents' support for their children's learning
- g. Expand families' opportunities to choose among public and charter schools
- h. Increase per-student support for under-resourced schools
- i. Help state and local education agencies build up their evaluation and research capabilities
- j. Expand free meals to low-income schools year round to ensure that poor children have access to nutritious foods



## *Regarding Corporate Campaign Finance*

Following is printed a resolution brought before the Coos County Democratic Party at the meeting on August 25th, 2026. This publication was printed before the vote was held, but the **result of the vote will be included in this publication's web appendix at [coosdialogue.com](http://coosdialogue.com)**

## ☛ Stop Corporate Donations in Oregon Politics ☛

As a result of the 2010 *Citizens United* ruling, an imbalance of power emerged in American politics. In defining corporations as persons and permitting them to spend unlimited amounts of money in political campaigns, the Supreme Court opened the way for the average American's voice to be significantly diminished.

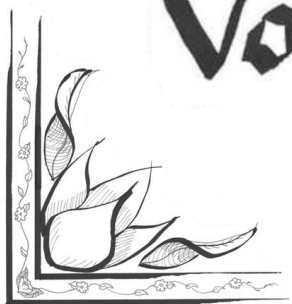
Despite Oregon's legislature passing *HB 4024* and *HB 4018* limiting corporations to 3,300 dollars per election per candidate, the law still allows corporations to make contributions as persons. In general, this legislation permits corporations to spend unlimited amounts on independent-expenditure-only committees, measures, recalls or petitions.

While understanding *HB 4024* & *HB 4018* are a good start and significantly hamper corporate spending, the law can and should go further. Recent legislation in Hawaii and an initiative in Montana go further and provide a blueprint for how Oregon can have even stronger protections against corporate interference in elections. Hawaii's legislation argues that corporations, LLCs, partnerships, nonprofit entities, and other artificial persons exist because the state grants them powers such as limited liability and perpetual existence; the state can therefore define those powers as excluding spending or contributions intended to influence candidates, political parties, or ballot questions.

Understanding that corporations maintain an interest in the governance of our state, that corporate revenue fuels Oregon's GDP, and that the bulk of Oregon tax revenue is paid by corporate entities, the Coos County Democrats maintain that **corporations are not persons, and therefore are not entitled to the right to freedom of speech protected by our nation's Constitution.**

Therefore, the Democratic Party of Coos County supports and will actively work toward creating and passing an initiative petition to redefine the rights of corporations in Oregon to exclude campaign expenditure.

*Vote results in web appendix.*





# Regarding Governor Kotek



From the Editor's Desk

I am voting for Tina Kotek for governor because she is fighting to end the homelessness crisis in Oregon. When she took office in 2023, unsheltered homelessness had increased sixty-three percent since 2017<sup>1</sup>, and she declared a state of emergency<sup>2</sup> to solve it. Since then, she has reduced the number of chronically homeless individuals in Oregon by over twenty percent,<sup>3</sup> she has provided over six thousand new shelter beds, she has rehoused over five thousand Oregon residents, and she has prevented nearly twenty-six thousand Oregon families from eviction and risk of homelessness<sup>4</sup>.

But Governor Kotek knows that the home isn't always the only solution to the problem of homelessness, and that's why she is fighting to expand access to behavioral healthcare for all Oregon residents—preventing the cycles of addiction, abuse, and mental illness that lead so many people to lose their housing and, ultimately, their lives. Kotek fought to expand the workforce serving inpatient mental healthcare<sup>5</sup>, testified before the Oregon Legislature to seek scholarship money for

students studying to serve in mental healthcare<sup>6</sup>, and directed excess Medicaid funds to be invested into youth behavioral programs<sup>7</sup>. To round all this off, Kotek pushed for and signed amendments to Measure 110, recriminalizing hard drugs and fast-tracking offenders to addiction treatment facilities.<sup>8</sup>

There are too many Republicans who would rather neglect the homeless, and their stance directly worsens one of the biggest issues in Coos County— our hospital. We can't change the oath that medical professionals take to deliver healthcare to anyone in need, no matter what. We **can** change the systems that work to prevent the homeless from experiencing the kinds of medical emergencies— like overdoses and psychiatric episodes —that land them in the emergency room with no path to pay for the care they receive. Neglecting the homeless to addiction, exposure, and mental illness increases the risk that they'll experience an emergency. Neglecting the homeless drives up our hospital's debt. Caring for, housing, and rehabilitating our homeless isn't just humane— it's common sense.

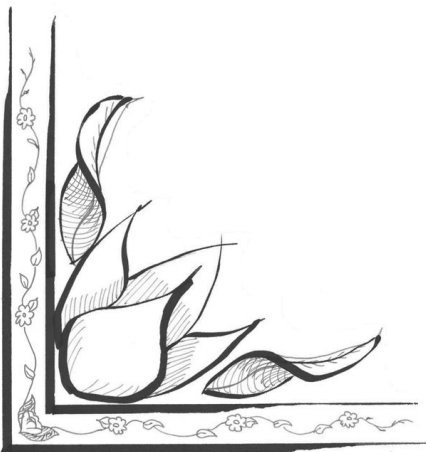
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## **All footnotes refer to the Edition 6 Appendix, available at [coosdialogue.com](http://coosdialogue.com)**

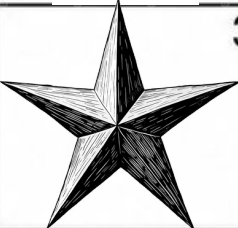
**Factuality** is a key aim of *the Coos Dialogue*. Evidence supporting each of these claims can be found linked in the web appendix. If you know more about this or any topic, or you want to refute a claim, feel free to submit your comments on the submissions tab of [coosdialogue.com](http://coosdialogue.com)

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*Want to be on a  
future mailing list?  
Drop us a line to let  
us know what it  
would be worth to you.*



# August - September: Coos County Democrats Events

| MONDAY | TUESDAY                                                                                | WEDNESDAY                                                                           | THURSDAY                                                                                | FRIDAY | SATURDAY                                                                                 | SUNDAY                                                                                 |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 24     |  25   | 26                                                                                  |  27   | 28     |  29   |  30 |
| 31     |  1    | 2                                                                                   |  3    | 4      |  5    | 6                                                                                      |
| 7      | 8                                                                                      |  9 |  10   | 11     |  12   | 13                                                                                     |
| 14     | 15                                                                                     | 16                                                                                  | 17                                                                                      | 18     |  19 | 20                                                                                     |
| 21     |  22 | 23                                                                                  |  24 | 25     | 26                                                                                       | 27                                                                                     |



—Central Committee Meeting: 5pm, 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the Month, CBPL



—Bandon Dems Meeting: 11am, 4<sup>th</sup> Thurs of the Month, Odd Fellows Hall



—Progressive Community Conversation: 5pm, Gloria Dei Lutheran



—Environmental Book Club (4pm) and Caucus Meeting (5pm), 7Deviils (OG);  
*reading something*



—Coquille Valley Dems Meeting: 5pm, 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday, Corner Bar & Grill



—**ENDORSEMENT MEETING: 5:30pm, 3427 Ash St, North Bend**



—Boardwalk Rally: 12pm-2pm, 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays



—Dems' Book Club: 2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs, 3pm, NBPL: reading *Utopia for Realists*



—Thirsty Thursday: 5:30pm, 7Deviils (OG)



—OBAB litter pickup! 9:45am, SWOCC Campus Trails