

OPINION

FIRST AMENDMENT “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press or the right of people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

OUR VIEW

Options for solution

We agree with Congressman Rick Nolan who credited Ranier and Koochiching County officials for considering solutions to rail crossing concerns.

Nolan met with local officials last week to hear about the issues.

Nolan said oftentimes community come to him with a problem, but no options for solving the problem.

In this case, he said the concern about crossings being blocked by Canadian National Railway trains came with proposed solutions.

Local officials not only provided Nolan with background on their concerns, including documentation of train crossings, they fully described in detail why the issue involves safety, the economy and inconvenience.

The timing of the meeting — while a train was stalled across the lift bridge — couldn’t have driven the point home better. The train blocked the Ranier rail crossing, stopping vehicle traffic for a time, sounded its horn several times and idled while stalled. Nolan and his staff watched the train from the window inside the Ranier Community Building for a few minutes, and after the meeting moved forward, it was obvious he and his staff

were keeping an eye on the train from their seats at the table.

Officials at the meeting made it clear they don’t want to inhibit the movement of goods across the border. They just want to solve problems they see as posing safety concerns, inhibiting development, causing a headache for local folks.

With the increase in rail use, they only see those concerns growing with more and longer trains crossing the border.

The main solution proposed involves relocating a U.S. Customs and Border Protection facility further from Ranier, which the local officials say would allow trains to be inspected and then move more quickly across the border clearing roads and the lift bridge. The idea seems worth fully exploring. There may be obstacles to overcome, but it’s a start toward a solution.

Nolan said he would initiate meetings between the parties and present the information gathered by the local officials.

Local officials deserve credit for not just voicing concern, but doing the homework to provide documentation and background, and most importantly offering options they see as reasonable and logical solutions.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Climate change: Fact of fiction

To the editor,

In his 2014 State of the Union Address, President Obama boldly stated “The debate is settled. Climate change is a fact.”

This past week, April 7, 2014, Secretary of State John Kerry, while before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee stated “All of the predictions of scientists are not just being met, they’re being exceeded.”

Former Secretary of State and probable presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton gave a speech in Portland, Ore., saying “Climate change is a national security problem, not just an environmental problem.”

Where are these people getting their information, and what is really behind this “crisis”?

If you will recall, Rahm Emanuel, President Obama’s chief of staff during his first term

as president made a statement saying “A crisis is too good of an opportunity to waste, if you don’t have one create one.” This statement I believe is the driving force behind climate change; it is mostly about politics and power.

The political community derives most of its information regarding climate change from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Most if not all of the supposed facts regarding climate change are based on computer modeling, which is only as good as the data fed into it. When that data has the driving force of politics behind it, one must immediately question its validity. Case in point would be the fiasco we have seen as the U.S. government, politically driven, tried to roll out Obama Care.

Fortunately we have an organization, Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change, to refute what the politicians are telling us. The NIPCC consists of a large group of leading environmental scientists from around the world who use the peer review process, checking the validity of each other’s work, not political motivation, to come up with their conclusions.

The week of April 7, 2014, the NIPCC released a statement with their findings, saying in part, “Any warming from greenhouse gas is so tiny that it cannot be detected from natural variation, the slight rise in CO2 has been mostly a plus for plants and animals and the huge cost industry has incurred, and ultimately passed on to us as consumers, due to government regulation,

has vastly outweighed any benefit we have been able to verify.

This whole climate change crisis can best be summed up by one of our founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson, “It is error alone which needs the support of government. The truth can stand on its own.”

This November, will decide if we want to go back to a government “of the people, by the people and for the people,” or if we will continue to stay our present course of a bloated self-serving bureaucracy, ever more intrusive in our daily lives, leading us toward a “Change for America” no one expected.

You decide, stand and make your voice heard. Please vote responsibly by making an informed vote.

Bruce Sampson Ray, MN

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The Journal welcomes letters from readers

Letters should be limited to 500 words or less. Longer letters may be edited. Letters must be signed and include the telephone number and address of the letter writer. Only the author’s city address will be published.

Mail letters to The Journal, 1602 Highway 71, International Falls 56649. Letters can also be sent by e-mail to laurel@ifallsjournal.com.

Making a difference in schools

To the editor,

Minnesota is doing the right thing by providing some mental health services in schools, but we can and must do better. An estimated 5 million children in the United States face mental health challenges, yet about two-thirds of these children do not presently receive needed services due to the high costs and limited availability of services in many communities.

Since mental health issues often appear for the first time in adolescence, with half of all cases of mental health disorders beginning by age 14, school-based mental health services is the most

favorable setting for youth development strategies, social and emotional learning and behavioral modeling. Schools are in an ideal position to identify emerging warning signs of mental illness and allow for more active supervision and behavioral management of students, even in non-classroom settings. The school environment is! also more conducive to effective team planning and problem solving through school-wide staff training and there’s no doubt that schools provide easier access to services for students and their families. Positive benefits of these programs include

improved grades, greater educational stability, enhanced emotional and behavioral health, decreased suicide attempts and a reduction in future long-term health care costs.

Importantly, the Minnesota School-Linked Mental Health Grant Program provides financial assistance to community mental health providers allowing them to provide services in the schools. Moving forward, it is vital that school boards and administrators be aware of these services and the financial assistance provided through the grant and that our legislators continue

to emphasize funding for this important program.

Mental health is too important an issue to be ignored. It is essential that we invest in our children through implementation and support of! these critical school-based programs. Speak with your local school administrators or community mental health service providers to inquire how the youth in your community can benefit from school-linked mental health services.

Sharon Bonnett Worthington, MN
Editor’s note: This letter was also signed by Chris Moylan.

Obamacare is a huge life saver

To the editor,

I have heard the Affordable Care Act 2010, commonly called Obamacare act under attack by many people.

On Feb. 10, I received a phone call no one should get. My mother, who is only 46 years old, was being air lifted to Duluth,

Minn. My mother was very sick with the H1N1 flu, pneumonia and a lung infection.

I started the process of filling for the Affordable Care Act about a month before. The process was a hassle, but like any new system it will have glitches. I will have to say

I am impressed with the professionalism of all the people I met along the way.

The Affordable Care Act saved my family a huge burden of medical bills. Just the helicopter ride was \$40,000.

I understand the frustration behind the Affordable Care Act, but

for me it was a huge life saver and changer to my family and myself. I understand the headache it has caused, but in my case it saved my family from another headache of medical bills.

Tyler Borgen International Falls, MN

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