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Editorial | Letters

Don't give more money to failing zoo

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I do not support giving taxpayer money to the Honolulu Zoo.

On the general election ballot, City Charter amendment No. 9 would require the city to set aside money from property taxes to support the zoo.

If the zoo lost its accreditation due to poor conditions, and if it cannot support itself from admission revenues, then it should be closed.

Many people are not aware of the cruelty behind zoos. Captive animals are deprived of everything that is natural and important to them and, as a result, they become bored and lonely and many even suffer from a condition known as zoochosis.

The large mammals at the Honolulu Zoo, such as the elephants, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, giraffes, lions and tigers, cannot roam the long distances as they are meant to do in nature.

The city should close the zoo and turn it into a parking lot. It would make a lot more money.

Vote no on amendment No. 9.

Stephanie McLaughlin

Mililani

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Let's get rail transit back on safe track

I feared I was the only one who read the advertisement by Dennis Mitsunaga in Sunday's Star-Advertiser ("Will the rail be safe to travel on?," Oct. 30), but I was heartened to read not only the editorial but two letters to the editor citing his warning ("New rail experts now must deliver," Star-Advertiser, Our View, Nov. 2).

I asked a Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation official at the Pearlridge open house about the snapped tendons and cracked shims and received platitudes that they all would be corrected and forensic testing would ensure there were no others.

My cousin lives in Los Angeles and the light rail there is awesome. It didn't come without issues, but the fact that HART hired Krishniah Murthy as its new interim executive director to fix the problems is encouraging. I am a fan of rail and I absolutely believe it needs to be built. Hopefully we are now on track. Let's get moving!

Karin Lynn

Moilili

Good luck acting like Kenoi at work

In regard to Hawaii County Mayor Billy Kenoi being found not guilty of all charges against him ("Not guilty," Star-Advertiser, Nov. 2): Gee, I'm going in to my boss today to see if I can get a surfboard, a bike and liquor and pay it back whenever I see fit. I'll get back to you on how that goes.

Jacob Vinton

Aliamanu

Cataluna perks up gloomy politics

Scott Keir's criticism of Lee Cataluna's column on Billy Kenoi's trial seems a bit pedantic ("Dull politicians better than Kenoi," Star-Advertiser, Letters, Nov. 2).

Cataluna's funny, witty, tongue-in-cheek style of writing is just the thing we need to get us through these disgusting elections and disgusting politicians; I hope she never stops.

I'm sure Cataluna wasn't mocking our politicians and, based on the jury's verdict, probably just said what everyone on the jury was thinking anyway ("Kenoi is the rare fun guy among dull politicians," Star-Advertiser, Oct. 30).

Orson Moon

Aiea

Oligarchy dominates American elections

Donald Trump was partially right about a “rigged system,” but with media help misdirected attention away from any evidence, such as a 2014 Princeton study finding that when popular opinion is objectively compared to public policies, America is not a democracy, but an oligarchy in practice dominated by a few with concentrated wealth.

The truth is elections are rigged in the favor of Republicans — by bogus voter ID laws in some key states to strategically disenfranchise certain voters, and gerrymandering district lines to skew representation, so a collapsing party like the GOP can wield disproportionate power and hold Congress hostage to a minority ideology.

At the same time, recent leaked emails revealing Democratic National Committee insiders manipulated a Hillary Clinton victory over Bernie Sanders exposes that both political machines are also part of the oligarchy subverting genuine democracy.

We can no longer tolerate this culture of normalized corruption. Vote no on Honolulu Charter Amendment 19.

Pete Doktor

Moanalua

Developer fees could have been a boon

The state Department of Education wants \$9,300 per housing unit (“DOE proposes fee along rail line,” Star-Advertiser, Nov. 3)?

Imagine how much money we would have if Gentry, Castle & Cooke, Schuler, Horton and other developers had been paying such development fees for roads, rail and schools over the last 50 years while getting rich and creating the traffic mess we now have.

Brett Phillips

Kaneohe

Parking changes just a fee to visit Waikiki

The city says that Waikiki parking could worsen (“City plan could worsen Waikiki parking,” Star-Advertiser, Oct. 31).

This doesn't happen on its own. It would be a result of the city converting currently free parking spaces into paid meter parking — a goal it has been attempting to accomplish for many years. It is a policy of squeezing every dime possible out of taxpayers, and actually amounts to an eviction of Oahu residents from Waikiki, a prime tourist destination.

The city says that such a move is necessary to update its parking strategy for Waikiki. In reality, the change amounts to a user's fee for Oahu residents to use Waikiki Beach, Kapiolani Park, Waikiki Aquarium and all destinations in Waikiki.

This is only the latest attempt to institute pay-to-park at every location, like the Pali and Hanauma Bay. We already pay taxes to maintain and use these venues and should not be charged what amounts to a user's fee in order to enjoy a day at the beach.

Anne Clarkin

Kapaa, Kauai