



August 30, 2016 | ☀️ 85° | 🚗 Check Traffic

Editorial | Letters

Precinct workers deserve respect

Posted August 30, 2016

August 30, 2016

It was with great interest that I read Jonathan Durrett's letter titled "Asking for voter ID is illegal in Hawaii" (Star-Advertiser, Aug. 27). Speaking as a volunteer precinct official, we are protecting voters when we ask for a photo ID as no one wants someone else voting as them.

If a photo ID is unavailable, as is the case with many of our elderly voters, we are instructed to ask for alternate information as outlined in our state-provided instruction manual and during our training. This reflects the "common sense" to which Durrett refers in his letter, and while I'm positive he didn't mean to belittle the "innocent and befuddled" woman, I feel for her.

It's difficult enough these days to get volunteers to work 12-13 hours for a stipend of \$85, and as often is the case only half of the volunteers actually show up. I strongly urge not only Durrett but all other voters to consider absentee ballots for the future. It's painless, efficient and no ID required. Mahalo!

Gwen Char Heliker

Makiki

City, state in dire financial straits

The recent column by Richard Borreca ("Crumbling Capitol building slowly losing its dignity," Star-Advertiser, On Politics, Aug. 14) and the letter from Tony Locascio

("Capitol a symbol of indifference," Star-Advertiser, Aug. 18) should be a serious wake-up call on the city's and state's dire financial conditions.

For a long time, we have been reading about our government buildings' badly needed repairs and lacking services. Everyone wants all departments and programs to have increased funding, but from where? Every department and service is probably underfunded and understaffed. Yes, there have been many inexcusable multimillion-dollar blunders, but the bottom line is we are virtually broke.

Major tax increases on so many people with minimum-wage incomes will force many to downsize, double up, move out to the streets or out of their birthplace islands: tragic. Increased tourism brings in lots of money, but we are being sold off to tourism. Every year we become less and less of a Hawaiian place. Will we be another city that has to declare bankruptcy?

Gordon Banner

Kalihi

Brave leaders stand in support of TMT

I am so proud of President Keahi Warfield and board member Richard Ha of PUEO (Perpetuating Unique Educational Opportunities) who support the Thirty Meter Telescope on Mauna Kea ("Pro-telescope group touts educational benefits," Star-Advertiser, Aug. 17).

They are brave enough to stand up to opponents who claim the telescope will desecrate sacred land. They seek educational opportunities for Hawaiian youngsters that include showing "that culture and science can coexist."

I know Warfield speaks Hawaiian fluently and has great respect for Mauna Kea. Richard Ha is so valuable as a representative of the agriculture we need for sustainability. Both men live and work on Hawaii island and know whereof they speak.

The word "sacred" is thrown around so glibly, putting off-limits a mountain that belongs to all us inhabitants and taxpayers of Hawaii. As a Native Hawaiian, I stand up for TMT and exhort all educated Hawaiians to speak up, too.

Gladys Lucas

Mililani Mauka

Trump dangerous, not entertaining

I was disturbed by Jacob Sullum's commentary, "Trump, Clinton both liars, but Trump more amusing" (Star-Advertiser, Aug. 13).

Although Sullum has some excellent facts about the lies of both, the apparently straightforward advice to vote for Donald Trump encapsulates a widespread journalist failure in this campaign, which has been to treat Trump as harmless “entertainment.”

No. Ignoring the Constitution and rule of law is not “bold.” Recommending torture and fomenting hatred might be “spontaneous,” but it does not solve problems. Seeing a candidate of a major party match a list of early warning signs of fascism does not give him “panache.” Racism is not “amusing.”

And, to add a lie Sullum does not mention, Trump’s leaving American workers with zero as he produces his Trump-branded products in desperately poor countries does not “make America work again,” as Trump’s lectern signs claim.

Kathy Phillips

McCully-Moilili

Newspaper biased in favor of Clinton

Whatever happened to fairness in reporting, open-mindedness instead of opinionated bias, plus judicious accountability?

The Star-Advertiser has twisted Donald Trump’s statements, personally judged his meanings, distorted facts and shown an overwhelming bias for Hillary Clinton.

How about some interpretations on Clinton’s statements, her questionable character and her many assertions, especially her ability to be commander-in-chief?

Show us both sides and let us decide for ourselves. I believe in a free press, love it, but I still want to think for myself.

Betty Berry

Makiki

Attract new teachers with good incentives

The editors mention alternative paths to teacher certification as a “reform” that would address our chronic teacher shortage (“Reforms could ease teacher shortage,” Star-Advertiser, Our View, Aug. 26).

Alternative certification, however, is no solution. It is already quite easy for someone with a college degree to become a teacher in a matter of months.

The question is, how do we interest people in pursuing a career that seems less and less desirable?

There are two ways to solve the ongoing teacher shortage. First, pay teachers enough to afford a comfortable lifestyle without having to seek additional part-time work.

Second, improve working conditions and create an atmosphere of professional respect and trust in which teachers rather than district authorities are the primary decision-makers in the classroom.

Only in this manner can we attract the best and brightest into a profession they currently shun.

Shirley M. Yamauchi

Makakilo