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## Letters to the editor (Dec. 19)

### **Electric cars mean less energy is wasted due to timing of recharge**

Two recent letters to the editor by Gary Hartman of Lebanon and Robin Stepanek of Corvallis discuss the impact of electric cars on the power grid. Their points seem to be common sense, more electric cars require more energy to be put into the electrical grid requires more power plants.

Turns out that electric cars can actually reduce the need for electrical generation. Here's how:

There must be enough generating capacity to cover peak loads, typically early in the morning when we're all frying eggs, taking baths, making coffee, etc. or on hot summer afternoons when air conditioners are all on. This peak is roughly 40 percent higher than demand the rest of the day.

The peak load powerplants idle all night, when energy demand is low. When would we charge up our electric cars? At night, of course, when we're asleep. Furthermore, electric car batteries collectively can carry a tremendous charge that can be partially siphoned back into the grid during the day, making the car owner a little cash and reducing peak energy loads. Voila! Less energy needed.

Seems that common sense makes more sense the broader one's information base. I suggest Thomas Friedman's new book "Hot, Flat, and Crowded" for a clear-eyed overview of the "smart grid" and other sustainability issues facing us.

Steve Cook, Corvallis

### **In support of more easily forming unions**

Isn't it enough that the mega-rich in this country have had a sycophant in the White House for the last eight years? Isn't enough that every whim of the corporations has been taken as the word of God by Bush & Co.?

Is it too much support the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act to give a little bit back to the people who are responsible for the gross domestic product in this country, i.e., the people who actually make the goods and perform the services that caused (pre-Bush, of course) the incredible creation and increase in capital which made this country the envy of the world?

If that is not enough to convince all the neocon reactionaries about the fitness of workers being able to freely and easily form unions, please remember what such "left wing tree-huggers" like Henry Ford figured out the last time a Republican administration sat by and watched as the U.S. economy went into the toilet, namely that without a strong, vibrant, and LARGE middle-class, who do you think will buy the houses, autos, washing machines, toasters (in short, all of the things that are produced and sold in this country) which represent the profits of the corporations which you have been at such great pains to exalt to the level of the Russian oligarchs.

Rex Roberts, Corvallis

### **Consider seriously the threat we're facing from Afghanistan**

Our country needs to weigh the seriousness of a threat of attack on us by terrorists from Afghanistan against the probable cost of attempting to control Afghanistan through military action. If we estimate that we can minimize that estimated threat by defending ourselves using other, less costly, methods, then our military should withdraw from Afghanistan.

Such a decision would not necessarily preclude our continued financial support of the Karzai government or of peaceful projects aimed at improving the lives of Afghan citizens. Our government should negotiate with the Taliban leaders about this. If we plan to remain in Afghanistan, we should be prepared to spend at least \$100 billion per year over the next eight years for that purpose.