

On airplanes and taxes

Re "Revenue seekers" (Newslines, by Ashiah Scharaga, Oct. 17):

As reported, two spoke (thanks, Mary Kay Benson) in opposition to restoring commercial air service to the Chico Airport. Our reasoning (falling on deaf ears) is simple: In a time when the burning of fossil fuel is precipitating an environmental holocaust, our use of air transport should be sharply curtailed, not enabled. Beyond that, short-hop flights (i.e., to SFO) are grossly inefficient—worse than driving an eight passenger van with only one passenger. (Overall, buses are three times more efficient than planes for domestic, intercity travel.)

In other news, the council heard painful facts from men in suits—aka Team Nakamura. Chico is roughly \$500 million "in the red" and counting—the lion's share due to deferred maintenance on sewers, storm drains, traffic signals and, especially, roads. Instead of raising sales taxes in the last 10 years (as did 99 percent of California cities),

Chico has been the poster child of tax-phobia and slash-and-burn governance.

A 1 cent sales tax is slated for the ballot in 2020, and would bring in about \$18 million per year—little and late. Short of divine intervention, most of our roads—now needing \$400 million in repairs—will suffer exponential deterioration and pavement failure. Maybe there's some perverse environmental silver lining to this mayhem.

Patrick Newman
Chico

Not so fast

Re "Where are the tax haters?" (Editorial, Oct. 17):

There is much to hate in the sales tax increase proposed. Bias and disinformation abounded as EMC Research's survey contacted 400 out of 90,000 plus residents. The desire to address unfulfilled needs should offer voters optional funding sources to achieve a stated goal. A miniscule percentage of potential voters were in favor of

the unrestricted funding intended for the general fund. Granted, 70 percent of those 400 said yes, but what about the remaining 89,600? Representative of the rest of us, I think not.

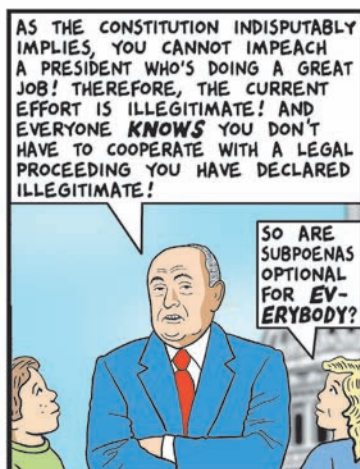
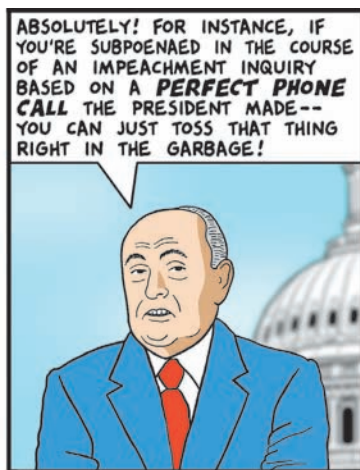
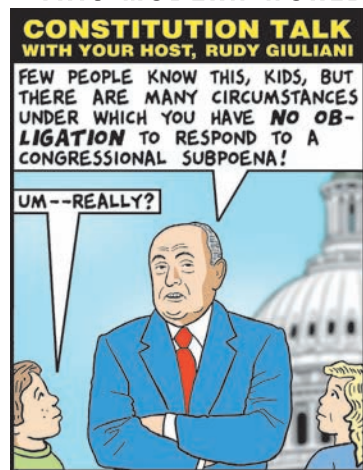
As to the amount, \$200 per year per person, that is erroneous. In order for Chico to receive \$18 million in tax receipts, a family of four would have to incur \$80,000 in taxable purchases. As not all is taxable, how does a family making \$40,000-plus do that? The aggregate sales amount would have to be \$1.8 billion to award the city its \$18 million in revenue.

Chico needs road repair, street lighting, fire and police, housing and homeless issues resolved, but do it with accurate, doable solutions. What if the simple majority-passed measure is used for pension shortfalls, salary increases and other perks? Think long and hard before you vote. You may regret it.

Joe Azzarito
Chico

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BY TOM TOMORROW



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