

OPINION

If you aren't stopping for these flashing lights...

Then you'll be stopping for these flashing lights!



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Injection sites encourage drug abuse

To the Editor,
There is no such thing as a "safe injection site" for drug users. These sites, by nature, are downright dangerous. With the number of deaths from opioids on the rise across the nation and right here in our backyard, we do not need to further encourage the use of illegal drugs. At my workplace, I see firsthand how devastating heroin can be for our communities and I would like to thank Congressman Reed for being a loud voice against this dangerous proposal. Our resources should go towards addiction prevention and treatment, not encouraging the use of harmful and illegal substances. It is troubling that Tracy Mitrano would support bringing more drugs into

our communities and for that alone we know that she will not represent us and our families. This is a dangerous precedent to set and one that we should all be fearful of.

Don Strong
Corning

Another sign-taker

To the Editor,
I took the signs too. Approximately two weeks before the Democratic Primary, I took some signs that said "Extreme Ithaca Liberal."

In my opinion, the signs were rude. They were a form of bullying and name-calling.

There has been too much of this behavior of late.

Congressman Tom Reed has used this term in the past. I was embarrassed that Mr. Reed felt he needed to try to influence the election this way.

Workers from Reed's office came to my home, because one of the signs contained a tracking device. I returned the signs.

They decided not to arrest me. Perhaps it is because I am registered Republican.

Nancy Smith
Corning

Taxes eating NY alive

To the Editor,
Just opened The Leader to find the list of delinquent taxes. it is 4-5 pages long in small print. The list gets bigger and bigger every year.

John Dean said during the Watergate hearings in the '70s "there is a cancer growing on the presidency." There is now a cancer growing on New York state.

It is slow and progressive, but property taxes are eating this state alive.

I have confronted the powers that be for years now, and their answer is "it is state mandates," or "costs continue to rise." There always is some excuse to avoid confronting the issue.

In the meantime, people are leaving this state in droves, people go south not only for the weather, but for the much lower taxes.

This area is a very beautiful place to live, but if you can't afford to live here it doesn't make any difference.

Would someone please

tell me why New York has to spend so much more than every other state on everything.

Richard Davis
Corning

Watches needs our support

To the Editor,
I have known Chauncey Watches since he was a child as I worked with his father at Sears.

I was also a police investigator for the City of Hornell and watched Chauncey as he was in school and graduated from law school to return to Steuben County to practice law in the County.

He developed into a very qualified attorney and Bath Village Judge. I have watched some of his decisions in front of and on the bench and believe beyond a doubt that Chauncey Watches is the most qualified person to run for Steuben County Court Judge.

He has over 14 years of experience as a judge and 33 years as an attorney.

Chauncey exemplifies thoughtfulness, trustworthiness and fairness, all of which are qualities a judge needs to have.

Chauncey needs our support in the Republican primary in September and in the general election in November.

Jack Beers
Canistota

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COMMENTARY | STATE SEN. TOM O'MARA, R-BIG FLATS

A timely reminder along the Erie Canal

Throughout this summer, the Corning Museum of Glass "GlassBarge" has traveled the Erie Canal celebrating the 150-year history of the company that evolved into Corning Incorporated. It has also been the signature event celebrating the Erie Canal's bicentennial.

Each milestone tells a remarkable Upstate New York success story. We remain fortunate that an amazing chapter of this story has unfolded — and continues to be told — right here at home. Corelle's recent announcement that a modern, high-tech, innovative commitment to worldwide manufacturing will be carried out in the Southern Tier is a perfect capstone to the GlassBarge's summer journey.

Yet, Upstate needs more. According to the Tax Foundation's 2018 State Business Tax Climate Index, New York State has the second-worst business tax climate in America.

Speaking in central New York in 2015, Governor Andrew Cuomo highlighted his commitment to Upstate New York and said, "It's the largest investment in upstate New York since the Erie Canal."

Really? We have to go back to the construction of the Erie Canal in the early 1800's to highlight the last meaningful investment in Upstate New York? Furthermore, investments Upstate pale in comparison to the billions upon billions upon billions being poured into just two New York City-area projects alone to rebuild the Tappan Zee Bridge and LaGuardia Airport.

It remains fair to ask if what has been done during the Cuomo years has been nearly enough to make up for lost time, or lost opportunities? On one hand, yes, there has been a revitalized investment of taxpayer dollars across the Upstate region through regional economic development councils. Under the noteworthy guidance of the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes councils, critical investments have been made that will make a long-term difference.

Governor Cuomo went on to say back in 2015, "The overwhelming majority of (state) legislators are from downstate

— overwhelmingly from New York City. They all have the same agenda which is New York City... That has played out over the years where upstate has been short-changed." Welcome aboard, governor (and anyone else who thought we were just blowing political smoke all these years about the upstate-downstate disparity in state government), I remarked at the time, and thanks for confirming what many upstate legislators have long been saying.

We are making important progress in key areas. I'm hardly ready to declare that upstate is getting our "fair share," however, as the governor claims, or that we have somehow leveled the political playing field.

The latest Tax Foundation rankings are stark. Andrew Cuomo started his tenure as a governor proclaiming that "New York State has no future as the tax capital to the nation," but his tax-cutting focus has steadily drifted over the years since 2011. This year, it has been thrown in the ditch.

Never forget the basics is a timely, commonsense reminder moving forward in New York State. It has to be about more than redistributing and spending taxpayer dollars. The Cuomo price tag for future generations of New York taxpayers could be stunning.

I have been praiseworthy about the significant gains New York's wine and craft beverage industries have made in recent years. In particular, state regulatory reforms have sparked this success in many instances. There has often been significant economic growth without costing taxpayers a dime.

So I again pose the fundamental question: What could New York State achieve if we approached every industry with an eye toward a more business friendly regulatory structure and tax burden?

It is time to get rid of the costly red tape that keeps a lid on upstate economic growth and makes New York's business climate one of the worst in America. Taking steps like regulatory reform and tax relief are fundamentally important to reclaiming Upstate New York's rightful place in this economy.

We should be talking about an Erie Canal-sized commitment to lowering taxes across the board and stopping overregulation.

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