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continues to employ illegal immigrants. The federal government's E-Verify program to match Social Security numbers with names works.

Those employers who use flaws as the excuse not to use it are either lazy or don't want to know the bad news.

Everyone knows that illegal labor drives down the hourly pay rate for Oregonians. Wall Street is not the only place where greed flourishes.

RED VANDEHEY
Hillsboro

A slap in the face to us

In regard to the article on the American International Group Inc. leaders giving themselves a spa retreat to the tune of \$444,000 of taxpayer money that was used to bail them out ("AIG leaders went on spa retreat," Oct. 8), it's hard to imagine even them having the audaciousness to do that.

The normal person today can't even get a loan, yet alone squander it. What a slap in the face to all of us who are getting laughed at every day by the chief executive officers of these financial institutions.

HELEN KELSO
Lincoln City

Right on taxes, judges

There are two game-changers in the march to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue: taxes and judges.

Similarities: John McCain and Barack Obama advocate an interventionist foreign policy in some form. (See Afghanistan.) Joe Biden advocated intervention in Darfur during his debate. This nonsense is not our concern or our mandate. Wilsonianism has bemused these two, though history is clear about its failure.

The 44th president will continue this interventionism — ramped up by President Clinton in Yugoslavia and put into high gear by President Bush in Iraq.

Taxes: McCain stands for reducing taxes and cutting spending — not enough, but he heads in the right direction. Obama is a tax-and-spender believing that the feds are our money's best steward.

Judges: McCain is Reagan. Obama is

left of Clinton. Considering both candidates support needless, perpetual foreign intervention and neither leads during the current economic fiasco, is being right on taxes and judges so bad?

BRIAN D. O'LEARY
Southwest Portland

Differing on health care

I have been a Barack Obama supporter from the start, and I am realistic enough to know that for us to win the change we so obviously need in the leadership of this country, politics must be served, and responses must be parsed, measured and assessed for the potential to be "spun" negatively by the other campaign.

In last week's debate with John McCain, Barack Obama overrode politics and campaigning and stated boldly that "health care should be a right" for all Americans, signaling the defining difference between the candidates — Obama clearly stands and speaks for the millions of families who are forced to choose between paying rent, buying groceries or seeking medical care for themselves and their children.

KATE ALLEN
Southeast Portland

Suicide act a blessing

Does the writer of the Oct. 8 article about depression and the Death With Dignity Act ("25% of sick who choose suicide may be depressed") really believe that those of us who are seriously considering ending our lives would otherwise be jumping up and down and happily elated about our intended life conclusions?

The Death With Dignity Act is a blessing for those of us facing death from irreversible conditions. Of course I'm depressed! Wouldn't you be when facing imminent death?

Outside attacks on Oregon's Death With Dignity law have proved to be baseless. Washington state now has a chance to join what is the ultimate human being's freedom.

L.H. McCAGG
Battle Ground, Wash.

the
Mann...
initiative. Give
convicted of a crime
a choice: execution or
without parole. Too ha...
What are you, soft on crime

Matthew Sproul
Southeast Portland

TO CONTRIBUTE

Submit items of 35 words or less to Opinion editor, The Oregonian, 1320 S.W. Broadway, Portland, OR 97201, or e-mail

commentary@news.oregonian.com. Please include your phone number and address, for verification only.

TALLY: WEEK OF OCT. 3-9, 2008

RECEIVED:	PUBLISHED:
899	72
letters	letters

MOST POPULAR TOPIC:
Presidential race
384 letters

Support Obama	264
Support McCain	66
Neither	18

With the first and only vice presidential debate on Oct. 2 and the second presidential debate on Oct. 7, the teams of Barack Obama/Joe Biden and John McCain/Sarah Palin commanded the attention of more than one third of our letter writers. Norman Krasne of Vancouver wrote after the presidential debate, "It seems that we Americans must make our choices based on demeanor, appearance, poise and so on. That's not much different from past elections. ... What will finally decide who becomes our next president? Probably whichever campaign is able to spend the most on 30-second sound bites with lowly and detestable tactics."

SECOND MOST POPULAR TOPIC:
Economy/bailout
140 letters

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