

# Jordan Cove wants us to trust them

Betsy Spomer claims in a recent op-ed to want to earn our trust through “vigorous public discussion” and to demonstrate that her company, Jordan Cove Energy Partners, is a “responsible corporate neighbor”. This is an incongruous statement from the CEO of a company that just a few short months ago spent almost \$700K, almost twenty times more than any local political campaign in Coos County history, specifically to thwart public discourse. Through the artfully named “Save Coos Jobs” campaign literature and media advertising the company even threatened Coos County with lawsuits if voters did not cast their ballots in the best interests of Jordan Cove.

Regardless of where you stood on community rights Measure 6-162, the Coos County Right to a Sustainable Energy Future Ordinance, the Canadian owned company’s interference in our local democracy are not those of a responsible corporate neighbor. Heck, we Americans cannot even buy their stock. There is nothing trustworthy about a foreign special interest pretending to be a local grassroots effort and funding a covert campaign riddled with provably false statements. False claims were made about imposing vehicle checkpoints or denying fuel to neighboring counties, even though the ordinance specifically protected existing applications of fossil-fuels.

The Save Coos Jobs campaign did this all the while omitting any reference to Jordan Cove or LNG or the Pacific Connector Gas Pipeline when the measure would have specifically prohibited the use of eminent domain solely for the company’s gain.

Of course, Jordan Cove did have locals willing to assist in its grassroots deception like Barry Winters and Coos Bay Mayor Joe Benetti claiming to be in-charge-of the campaign even

though it was run out of Portland by a company called Prospect PDX. By way of proof, Prospect PDX which was paid more than \$212K, ran a similar albeit unsuccessful campaign against a community rights measure in Lincoln County. That measure to ban aerial spraying included a non-violent direct-action enforcement provision in the event a corporate actor attempts to violate the will of the people. Prospect spun that provision into a legalization of vigilantism which, while false, also somehow made it into the campaign here despite there being no such clause in Measure 6-162. The campaign was even able to employ a local farmer to participate in an ad spreading this falsehood.

According to OreStar, no member of the local campaign committee contributed a cent. In fact, Benetti was paid \$433.53 by the campaign to hold the election night dinner at his restaurant.

There is no denying there will be some local profiteers, if only short term, should Jordan Cove be built. Pro-gas advocates may sincerely believe that tethering the community to 19th century energy technology and shouldering the health costs associated with burning fossil-fuels will bring long term benefits to the county despite all the empirical evidence to the contrary. This may explain, though not excuse why local politicians like county commissioners Bob Main and Melissa Cribbins and John Sweet continue to carry water for Jordan Cove and not only ignore but defend this assault on our local elections.

Spomer works in an industry that is only profitable thanks to \$5.3 trillion a year, a staggering 6.5% of global GDP, in taxpayer funded subsidies. According to a new study prepared by staff of the International Monetary Fund, not only do these fossil-fuel subsidies damage the environment they discourage investments in renewable energy and are an inefficient means of supporting low-income households.

The human health costs of fossil fuels are estimated at \$74.6 billion annually, yet the Save Coos Jobs campaign accused the measure backers of being “radical environmental extremists” for daring to want clean air and water.

Protection by the US military for overseas oil sources amounts to \$1 per gallon of what we pay at the pump.

Clearly, this is not a sustainable industry and it's no wonder the company would rather place its fortunes in FERC, where it is virtually guaranteed a permit to pollute our air and waterways, than in the voters of Coos County.

Renewable energy is now competitive with and even cheaper than fossil fuels and jobs in the renewable sector are growing at a pace twelve times greater than the US economy.

Behind her deceptively placid smile, Spomer is asking us to put faith in her antiquated, non-sustainable, taxpayer subsidized business model and trust in a company that was willing to deceive county voters, trod all over our local democracy and wants to forcibly take land from unwilling Americans all to enrich Canadian shareholders.

If you want to help permanently stop this boondoggle and ban the pipeline send an email to [cooscommons@gmail.com](mailto:cooscommons@gmail.com)