

editorially speaking

It’s not a ‘bypass’:  
A bad plan is a bad plan,  
no matter what you call it

The prospect of converting all of US83 Highway into four lanes, which will include a bypass around Scott City, is likely to bring mixed reactions - depending on how recently one saw a semi barrel through Scott City or through a “very yellow” light.

In reality, it’s years from happening - if ever. Honestly, how long have we had to wait for passing lanes between Scott City and Garden City? So, getting worked up over the pros and cons of a four-lane highway and the prospect of a bypass is a bit premature.

However, Scott City and other cities along the US83 corridor are participating in the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program which has the admirable goal of reducing transportation fatalities and injuries on Kansas roadways.

Of course, who could be opposed to that?

During recent presentations to the Scott City Council and Scott County Commission, representatives with the SS4A program outlined potential projects in and around Scott City.

Though representatives were reluctant to term one proposal a “bypass” that’s exactly what it is. It would redirect northbound large vehicle traffic from US83 onto County Road 140 - either west to Kansas Road or east to Mesquite Road.

At best, the plan seems rather vague. At worse, it’s ill-conceived.

Let’s look at the bypass proposal on Road 140 to Mesquite, only because it makes more sense than going west to Kansas Road, and ask the following:

**1)** Whereas current oversized vehicles (wind turbines, etc.) can travel north and south through town with relative ease, forcing them to negotiate a turn onto Road 140 is a potential nightmare.

We’ve witnessed this numerous times at the US83/K96 intersection, so what is gained by forcing traffic to be backed up at Road 140 while trucks with large loads are trying to turn onto a two-lane black-top?

**2)** After navigating the first turn onto Road 140, repeat at Mesquite Road.

**3)** After these turbines and other oversized loads have reached K96 Highway, what then?

That’s the question we asked of the SS4A team and the response was, “They can use the alternative route to Kansas Road?”

That was no response. Oversized vehicles will still face the same problem at K96, just on the other side of town.

The SS4A plan makes no provision for taking this traffic further north around Scott City and possibly exiting at Road 160 (north side of the golf course) and re-entering US83. That means, this same traffic will be forced to make another difficult turn as it enters K96 Highway and then do the same at US83.

If Mesquite Road is extended north to Road 160, is the county willing to take on this construction cost and added maintenance?

If the state provides cost-share assistance, how long will we have to wait for that to happen?

If the cost of improvements/overlay on Road 140 and Mesquite has been pegged at \$1.75 million, how much more will it cost to extend Mesquite as a north bypass?

**4)** For southbound traffic, repeat all of these steps in reverse.

And this doesn’t include any projections about long-term cost to county taxpayers for maintaining Road 140 and Mesquite Road under this type of traffic.

There’s also the likely resistance from local convenience stores and fastfood establishments that rely on truck traffic. Though, one can debate whether that should be a consideration.

Of course, no one is opposed to the goal of making our highways safer. According to statistics provided by SS4A, in the 10-year period from 2013-23, there were 249 vehicle accidents in Scott County, of which 74 resulted in injuries and 17 led to fatalities.

But how many of those occurred within Scott City? How many were vehicle accidents involving local residents? How many were the result of truck traffic which could have been avoided had there been a bypass?

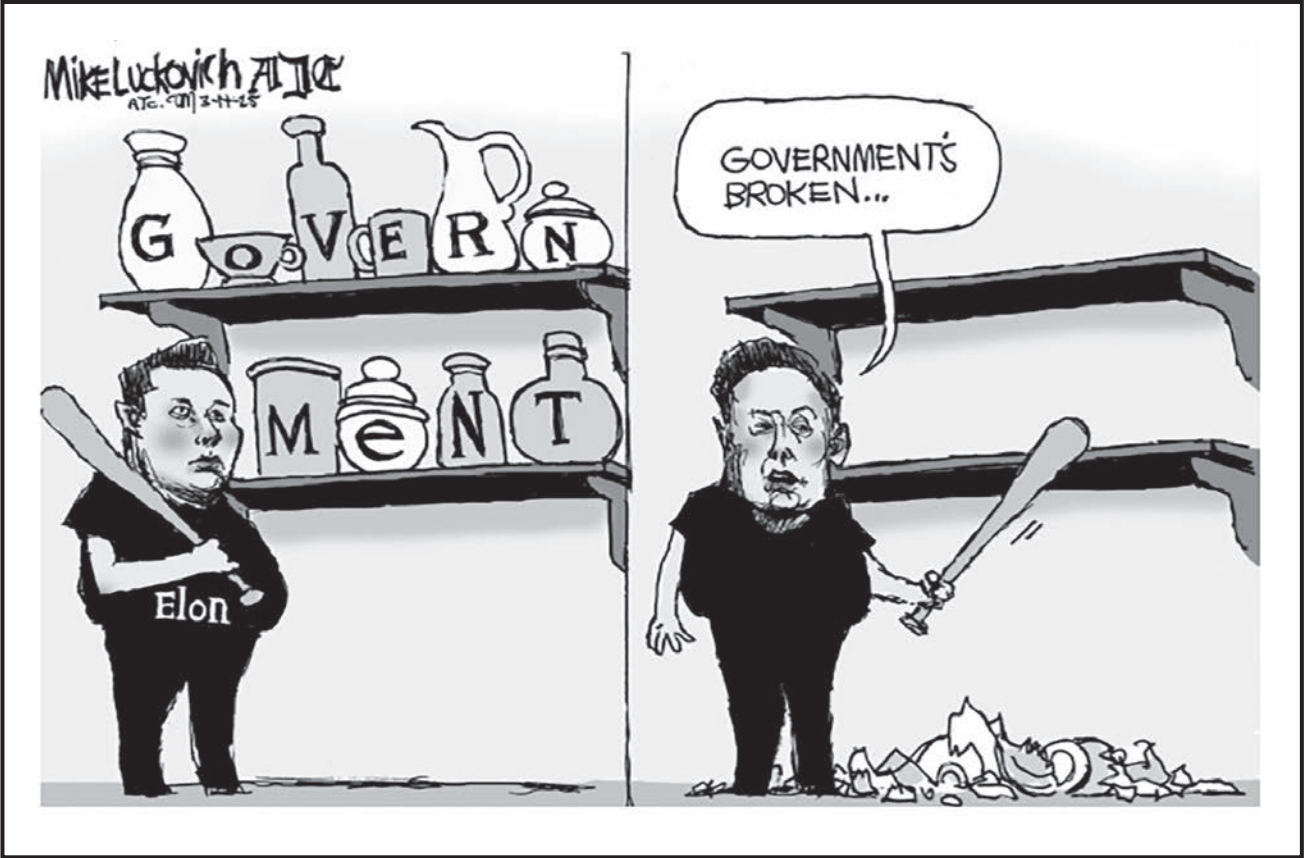
That kind of information might be helpful in determining whether the proposals offered by SS4A justify what will surely be a high price tag?

The SS4A goal is to have zero traffic injuries and fatalities on US83 Highway by 2030. It’s nice to have goals. It’s even better to be realistic.

In time, maybe US83 will become a four-lane and a true bypass will be constructed that can accommodate large vehicles. The pros and cons of that will be a debate for another time.

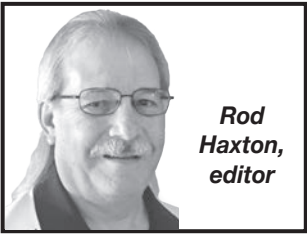
In the present time, the SS4A proposal looks like it will create a nightmare scenario for heavy traffic in and around Scott City. A solution isn’t a solution if it creates more problems.

We’d advise the SS4A team to return to the drawing board and come back when they have more answers and a plan that makes a little more sense.



When thinkers become the enemy

People talking without speaking  
People hearing without listening  
*The Sound of Silence*  
*Simon and Garfunkel*  
\* \* \*



Sen. Doc Marshall is back on the road again and no one can claim our esteemed senator didn’t learn something after the Oakley debacle.

In order to keep “democratic activists” on the payroll of George Soros from crashing the party and giving Doc an earful of what he doesn’t want to hear, the town hall was by invitation only and held in the basement of the Woodson County Courthouse in Yates Center.

Oh, the courage.

From a sanctuary safe from what Republicans fear most - facts - Doc could ramble on that autism is caused by smart phones (in addition to vaccines) and make the false promise that neither Trump, Elon Musk nor Republican lawmakers are coming after Medicaid.

Really? Because someone in the House of Representatives passed a budget resolution that will slice \$880 billion from Medicaid, affecting nearly 80 million Americans.

Likewise, Trump’s budget wish list also includes cutting \$230 billion from the USDA and \$330 billion from education.

Perhaps Doc would like to assure our farmers and educators that they also have nothing to worry about.

When Doc spews such nonsense it gets to the heart of why he is frightened of having legitimate town halls where people ask legitimate questions and expect similar responses.

It further explains why Republicans offer no protest to Trump’s plans to shutter the Department of Education and why they are silent as Trump threatens to cut hundreds of millions of dollars from universities.

Trump is threatened by

anyone with more than a fourth grade education. And whether by design or because it just feels natural, he understands that the biggest threat to his power are educated people.

That makes him no different than any other authoritarian who feels they must rally their supporters against the so-called “liberal elites.”

Authoritarians can’t survive without sheeple.

When university students protest the genocide in Gaza, Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) refers to it as “moral rot.” Vice President J.D. Vance targets university professors as “the enemy.”

But why wait until young adults are of college age?

It’s often been said that “knowledge is power” and from the ultraconservative way of thinking it’s necessary to sabotage that sense of empowerment as early as possible.

That’s why ultraconservatives have dedicated their lives to undermining public education and promoting private schools - whether that be in Kansas or at the national level.

Public education emphasizes the value of individualism and the opportunity for everyone to pursue their dreams - if they are so motivated.

That’s unacceptable to ultraconservatives who know that by characterizing the educated as the enemy, allowing others to make decisions for you becomes acceptable.

It’s been a common tactic by totalitarian governments throughout history to promote anti-intellectualism as a means of harnessing political power.

Between 1-2 million people were killed during China’s “cultural revolution” which went after intellectuals and scientists, leading to a shutdown of the nation’s schools and universities.

During the Cambodian genocide (1975–79), the Khmer Rouge under Pol Pot nearly destroyed its entire educated population.

Should we be surprised that Donald Trump’s rise to the presidency was based on “alternative facts” and MAGA uprisings (See THINKERS on page 12)

EV ‘overcapacity’ is a myth

A recent Bloomberg report discredited the American excuse that China’s high quality and low cost new electric vehicles (EVs) are only due to “overcapacity” caused by Chinese government subsidies.

Author David Fickling notes that European and American carmakers likewise get government subsidies, pointing out the “subsidies received by Volkswagen in 2023 were greater than every cent declared by carmakers in the same fiscal year” and that “Ford also received more money than any Chinese rival.”

The lower cost Chinese EVs are now mostly superior to American and E.U. technology. But the U.S. (definitely) and E.U. (possibly) will become more

**education  
frontline**  
by John Schrock

protectionist.

The U.S. is undoubtedly going to keep our market closed to more economical and usually superior China EVs. But neither U.S. or European EV producers will be able to compete with China’s EVs in third market countries.

According to the South China Morning Post (SCMP), the China automaker BYD (Build Your Dream) surpassed Tesla in pure-EV sales in China back in 2023. In the fourth quarter, Tesla sold 484,507 while BYD sold 526,409. In 2023, BYD sold over three million EVs and hybrids.

**China’s number one electric automaker BYD has released its new Qin L and Seal 06, with a range of 1,305 miles on a fully charged battery and a full tank. Both models cost \$13,767.**

China now has an array of carmakers and exported 1.5 million EVs in 2023, not including hybrids.

According to Bloomberg, “Chinese EV and hybrid carmaker BYD sold 500,526 vehicles in October (2024); 310,912 of those were plug-in hybrids . . . and 31,200 of BYD’s sales came from outside China.”

The \$28.3 billion in BYD’s revenue exceeded Tesla’s.

Over the last decade, China has moved far ahead of all other countries in technology-intensive products: electric vehicles, lithium-ion bat-

teries, photovoltaics (solar power), wind power, modular nuclear power, long-distance power transmission and 5.5G (heading toward 6G).

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Over half of the cars sold in China have been EVs and hybrids since July of 2024. Chinese buy considerably more cars than Americans, and last July saw 1.03 million (See MYTH on page 12)

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