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Thanks, DeWit, for exposing flaws of Ducey funding plan

Gov. Doug Ducey's proposal to sell state trust land to finance education is clearly a one-time offset that fails to address the underlying structural weakness of education in Arizona, that it's not fully tax funded.

This is fraudulent in many ways: It's a shell game; the pea is not under any of the shells. It's bating and switching; promising everything upfront but selling you a lesser product in the end. It's a Ponzi scheme; where trust land sales are used to create a house of cards.

It's the governor selling used cars that are shiny and run for a few thousand miles before breaking down. It's smoke and mirrors, appeasing two constituencies — parents who want education as a priority and Republicans who profit from tax cuts. Ducey want his cake and eat it too.

Really, there are too many clichés in this proposal to name them all. But we should start. Thank you, state Treasurer Jeff DeWit.

— Gary Freitas, Phoenix

Trust land plan has no chance if Ducey won't abide by Prop. 301

Re: Your Thursday editorial about Gov. Doug Ducey's and state Treasurer Jeff DeWit's positions on education funding from the state land trust fund.

You mention there is a fertile middle ground. I disagree with that premise. The answer has been staring at the Legislature and governor and they refuse to see it. Quit ignoring the will of the voters in 2000 and implement Prop. 301 instead of fighting it in court.

Gov. Ducey's plan has no chance, if he thinks voters will approve it when they know he won't abide by their year 2000 decision approving Prop. 301.

— Angel Rodriguez, Glendale

Pact is to impede nuclear ambition, not settle old feuds

Don Nelson (Wednesday letters) suggests that those who support the proposed nuclear deal with Iran ponder why Russia, Hezbollah, Hamas, Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad and Iran are so happy with the deal.

There is no need to ponder. Russia and China were among the six nations to develop the agreement.

If the agreement goes into effect, Russia and China will be able to resume trading with Iran, which will be good for their sluggish economies. If the agreement does not go into effect, Russia and China will likely break from the sanctions to resume trading with Iran. Thus, making continued sanctions against Iran ineffective.

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Hezbollah, Hamas, Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad and Iran are Shi'a, not Sunni. Although the Middle East is complicated, almost every conflict and alliance in that region can be understood by knowing if the country or organization is Shi'a or Sunni. What side are they on in this centuries old schism?

The only purpose of the nuclear deal with Iran is to seriously impede Iran's development or acquisition of nuclear weapons. It is not intended to topple evil empires or solve bitter feuds that have existed for almost 1,000 years.

— Dorothy O'Connell, Tempe

While Obama celebrates, Americans remain in Iran jails

Four American hostages are held in a country that last week had crowds yelling "Death to America" / "Death to Israel." The release of these Americans was not a part of the negotiations between Iran and the U.S.

The purpose of negotiations is simple. If you don't ask, you certainly won't receive.

President Obama is out celebrating his victory. Our fellow Americans are in a prison in Iran.

— Katie Taylor, Scottsdale

Charter schools must accept all students, including disabled

There are number of troubling mis-truths in the July 4 letter by Ginni Shuss of the Osborn School District.

I am saddened by stories of parents struggling to find educational accommodations for their children with special needs.

It is unacceptable for any public school, district or charter, to deny enrollment for a child with a disability. If these situations are occurring, we encourage parents to contact the dispute coordinator at the Arizona Department of Education.

Public charter schools are bound by the same laws as district schools to accept all students, including those who require specialized instruction. Many high performing charter schools have developed specialized instruction to accommodate students with disabilities.

The Arizona Autism Charter School,

which falls within the boundaries of the Osborn School District, provides high quality, specialized education accessible to students with autism spectrum disorder.

So it is a disservice to hardworking charter school teachers and administrators to allege that all charter schools are not following the letter of the law. That is simply false.

As an association, our priority is to strengthen public education through productive dialogue on the issues facing our students and families. We encourage our colleagues to do the same; our children deserve it.

— Eileen Sigmund, Phoenix
The writer is president and CEO of the Arizona Charter Schools Association.

If parts are viable for transplant, then isn't fetus a human being?

The article that revealed the vile procedures used by Planned Parenthood to harvest the organs of the fetus being aborted brings up the question of when is a fetus a person.

If the organs are viable and able to be used in living babies, then to me it only shows that the fetus is already a human being murdered for the whim of a so-called mother.

Planned Parenthood is not in the business of helping abort babies from a woman in dire medical need. That is done in a real hospital by real doctors who believe in their oath to do no harm. This procedure needs to be called what it is: murder of the unborn.

— Jim Ferguson, San Tan Valley

Muslim headscarves are no scarier than my gold cross

The Arizona Republic's informative and interesting article Tuesday clearly shows that all Muslim followers are not radicals. Khalife Kabbani explained her views and reasons for wearing a headscarf. Not so scary was it?

Her simple explanation made it clear. It is her symbol of faith like my gold cross on a chain is a symbol of my faith. She is for peace and tolerance, and many of us can learn from her.

She also voiced the belief that not all Muslims are for hatred, killing and war. I wish everyone had the chance to know a Muslim as a friend and not fear them as an enemy. It would open up a world of new friends to all of us.

— Janice Weaver, Casa Grande

If nothing else, Diane Douglas doesn't give up any fight easily

Re: "Douglas may appeal Education Board suit dismissal," Wednesday *Arizona Republic*.

Of course she will. With her tenacity to win, the only difference between Diane Douglas and a pit bull is lipstick.

— William Cochran, Phoenix