

# OPINION

## Omaha World-Herald

Founded 1885 | A Lee Enterprises Newspaper  
pulse@owh.com | omaha.com/opinion

### Editorial Board

**Chase Rankin**, President  
**Ben Doody**, Executive Editor  
**Jess Rollins**, Managing Editor  
**Jeremy Aspen**, Community Representative

### Write to the Opinion page

Letters must include your full name, home address and phone number. (Addresses and phone numbers are not published.) Letters must be your original words and typically should be no more than 300 words in length. We edit for reasons including taste, accuracy, clarity and length. Submit a Pulse letter by emailing pulse@owh.com or going to omaha.com/opinion, clicking "Submit a letter" and filling out the form.

### MIDLANDS VOICES

# Congress has failed to keep up with crypto growth

Nebraska has always been a leader in American innovation. Our tradition of hard work and forward-looking investment has made Nebraska a place where bold ideas grow — and where businesses succeed on a national and global scale.

Today, a new wave of innovation is transforming finance and technology: blockchain and digital assets.

In Nebraska alone, more than 175,000 Nebraskans hold crypto — families seeking better ways to save, small businesses using cheaper payment tools, and innovators building the next generation of technology.

Yet Washington has failed to keep up. Instead of providing clear rules of the road, regulators have left consumers and entrepreneurs in limbo. That lack of clarity risks pushing jobs and innovation away from Nebraska and the United States.

During my time in the Unicameral, I worked to ensure that would not happen here. I was proud to lead on LB 649, the Nebraska Financial Innovation Act, which made our state one of the first in the nation to create a legal framework for digital-asset depository institutions.

This groundbreaking law allowed banks to safely custody cryptocurrency and digital assets under clear state rules. LB 649 didn't just signal that Nebraska was open for blockchain — it put us on the national map as a forward-thinking hub for digital finance. I saw firsthand how clarity in law unlocks investment and creates jobs, and I'll carry that experience to Congress.

In Washington, my priorities are simple: give Americans clarity, protect consumers, and ensure the U.S. remains the world leader in innovation.

First, Congress must pass and send to the President's desk the CLARITY Act — legislation that will finally establish a clear market structure for digital assets. This bill would (no pun intended) offer real clarity to millions of Americans who use crypto and build with blockchain technology. Without it, innovation will keep migrating offshore, costing jobs and leadership.

Second, we need to strengthen a pro-innovation framework. Assets like Bitcoin and Ethereum should fall under the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), while the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) should focus on transparent rules for capital formation in blockchain projects. Instead of regulation by lawsuit, we need regulation by statute — just as we did in Nebraska — to empower both builders and consumers.

Third, Congress should protect and advance stablecoins, digital tokens backed by dollars or other assets that are already reshaping how money moves.

Earlier this year, Congress passed the GENIUS Act, a signature achievement of the Trump administration that created guardrails for stablecoins while preserving innovation.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has noted that these guardrails strengthen — not weaken — the U.S. dollar. Any effort to roll back this progress, whether by banks or bureaucrats, would be a direct attack on a proven American success story.

Fourth, we must preserve decentralization and the right to self-custody. The strength of blockchain lies in its peer-to-peer design, which empowers individuals and small businesses to compete with big institutions. Congress must ensure Americans can hold their own assets and participate in open networks without heavy-handed regulation.

Finally, we must put consumer protection and transparency first. Trust is the foundation of finance. We should require openness and accountability from centralized intermediaries — such as exchanges that hold customer funds — without imposing one-size-fits-all rules that would crush decentralized systems.

This approach isn't radical — it's Nebraska common-sense. Our state has always thrived by encouraging innovation while protecting people. That balance turned Omaha into a national hub for insurance, banking, and logistics — and it can now make Nebraska a national leader in blockchain technology.

The stakes are high. If Congress fails to act, jobs and investment will move abroad. Nebraska innovators will be forced to take their ideas elsewhere. Worse, Nebraskans who already own crypto will continue to face uncertainty and risk without the protections that clear, fair rules can provide.

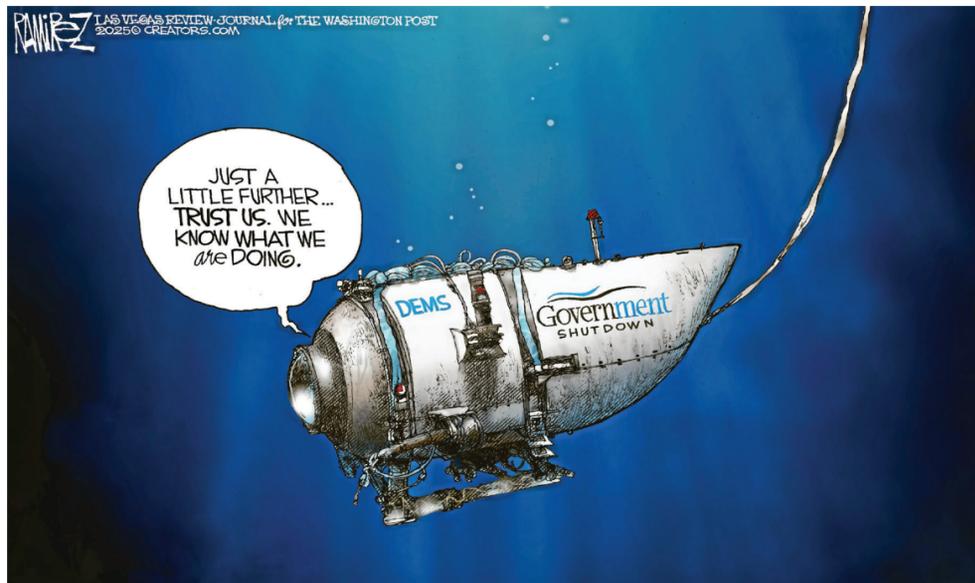
As someone who has worked in both business and government, I know how to create environments where innovation can flourish responsibly. I've done it before in Nebraska's Unicameral — and I'll do it again in Congress.

The future of finance is being written right now. With clarity, guardrails, and the Nebraska values of freedom and responsibility, we can ensure it's written here at home — in Omaha, in Nebraska, and across America.

That's the future I'll fight for in Congress.

Brett Lindstrom, a former state legislator from Omaha, is running in the Republican primary for Congress in Nebraska's 2nd Congressional District.

### MY VIEW | MICHAEL RAMIREZ



@Ramireztoons

michaelpramirez.com

### THE PUBLIC PULSE

#### Did Rühle miss his chance to go to Penn State?

Matt Rühle may have lost more than just another important Big Ten game when Minnesota destroyed the Huskers on Friday night. He may have lost his window to become the next head coach at Penn State.

Last week was a whirlwind of possibilities after Penn State fired James Franklin. Rühle initially appeared to be one of the most likely replacements.

But what about now? Did the Huskers' abysmal performance on Friday night make it extremely likely that Rühle isn't going anywhere?

Last week, Coach Rühle said he wants to turn the Nebraska football program into a "beast." Great intentions, but are we still on schedule to actually reach such a lofty goal?

I am reminded of the old Chinese proverb: "When you continue to get devoured by gophers, you are not yet ready to enter the arena with lions." (i.e. Nittany Lions)

There is no question that Matt Rühle is a good football coach. But there are plenty of other good coaches in the college ranks as well. So, how far did Rühle's stock drop after the debacle on Friday night?

Many Husker fans, myself included, can still envision Rühle returning the Husker football program to its former days of glory. But the timeline we envisioned may need to be tweaked.

How many Penn State fans would be satisfied to welcome a new coach that just got crushed by Minnesota? The rest of the Husker season may reflect the same, or it could surprise us. That is, if we finish the year with four or five

more victories.

Either way, it appears to this fan that Rühle may have lost his window to lead his alma mater in Pennsylvania. If so, such a development has the potential to be good news for Nebraska football. The opportunities here continue to be sky-high.

And so, a word of encouragement to Matt Rühle, who must be feeling terribly dejected right about now: When one window closes, another door opens.

**Dan Delzell**, *Papillion*

#### Halloween is a great time to celebrate IP

As Halloween approaches, Nebraskans are busy carving jack-o'-lanterns, stocking up on candy corn and bracing for a few good scares. But there's one thing that shouldn't haunt us this season: losing our best ideas. In addition to being Bioscience Month in Nebraska, October is National Intellectual Property (IP) Month — a perfect time to celebrate America's one-of-a-kind system that protects innovation, rewards creativity, and fuels our local economies.

It's easy to forget that even some of Halloween's most beloved traditions started with protected ideas. The modern jack-o'-lantern design was patented in the 1890s, and candy corn — that sweet, polarizing fall classic — is the product of a patented process first created in the late 1800s. These little inventions remind us how American ingenuity, backed by a strong IP system, has shaped not only our economy but our culture, too.

Here in Nebraska, that spirit of invention runs deep. From Edwin Perkins' creation of Kool-Aid in Hastings to the legendary Reuben sandwich born at Omaha's Blackstone Hotel, Nebraskans have long

turned bright ideas into household names. Today, our state's innovators — from ag-tech startups in Lincoln to biotech firms in Omaha — continue to build on that legacy. Each of them depends on America's IP system to protect their work, attract investment, and keep good jobs growing right here at home.

Without those protections, innovation would be like a haunted house with the doors left wide open — inviting others to sneak in and steal what's inside. But thanks to America's commitment to safeguarding ideas, inventors, artists, and entrepreneurs can share their creations with confidence.

So this Halloween, as you light your jack-o'-lantern and sneak another piece of candy corn, remember: our nation's IP system keeps the tricks out of innovation — and ensures the treats keep coming for Nebraska and beyond.

**Rob Owen**, *Omaha, executive director, Bio Nebraska*

#### Heartsick over state's decision on McCook

The fact that some Nebraskans are rejoicing that we shall be earning millions of dollars off the bodies of human beings being incarcerated at McCook makes my heart hurt.

These folks are not criminals. In the words of the Douglas County commission, these are mothers and fathers with no criminal record.

Shame on those who pursued this agreement in secrecy, refusing to meet with or listen to the opposition. The people of Nebraska are supposed to have a voice in such decisions.

Nebraska, my heart hurts.  
**Marylyn Felion**, *Omaha*

# Gaza peace plan will fail without US troops

When I led U.S. European Command from 2009 to 2013, I often went to Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It was a daunting part of my assignment, and I sought advice from former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

"The key to understanding the Middle East," he said, "is understanding and accepting that every solution is merely the admission ticket to the next problem."

Even as President Donald Trump takes a deserved victory lap for working out a ceasefire and hostage release, he and his team need to bear that maxim in mind.

Do the U.S. and its allies have the required determination to help implement the tenuous ceasefire? Are they willing to offer the required assistance — perhaps including blood and treasure — to help forge a permanent peace?

Trump is not enthusiastic about overseas troop deployments, and the use of U.S. boots on the ground in Gaza may be a bridge too far. But Pentagon planners have lots of options short of that.

Step one is at the U.S. Embassy and consular posts in Israel. While the embassy in Jerusalem has a contingent of U.S. troops assigned to it — for protection and to liaison with the Israelis and Palestinians — that force needs to be significantly increased for a potential operational surge.

Additionally, the U.S. intelligence agencies should each send at least one top analyst for monitoring and providing early warning of backsliding by Hamas.

For increased force protection, the Pentagon can deploy Marine Fleet Antiterrorism Security Teams made up of several hundred Marines in half a dozen platoons. Whenever a crisis loomed in the region during my years at Central Command, I deployed these teams, including in Libya when the war there ramped up in the early 2010s.

Now we come to the really hard part: What will be the role of U.S. forces in Gaza itself? Expect caution. The bombing of the Marine barracks in Lebanon in 1983, which killed 231 service members, will never be forgotten at the Pentagon.

A prudent deployment could be one Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked in an Amphibious Readiness Group. This would consist of three to six warships, several thousand Marines and sailors, a couple of dozen helicopters, significant logistical and medical capabilities, and missile defense provided by one to three guided missile destroyers. (Coincidentally, this is essentially the U.S. force off the coast of Venezuela now.)

A Marine Expeditionary Unit doesn't need a base ashore: It can operate in international waters of the Mediterranean, and in a crisis the warships could pull into Israeli ports. So even if the U.S. doesn't want on-the-ground forces in the Gaza Strip, these

Marines could provide significant assistance to the putative international peacekeeping force.

Overall, the U.S. support contingent would consist of about 5,000 sailors and Marines, and a few hundred additional Army soldiers ashore, all answering to a commander afloat in a warship.

A wide array of interests would hammer out the structure of an international security force. I could see the Israel Defense Forces keeping 30,000 or so troops in the half of Gaza it now controls, while Palestinian Authority forces become the spearhead of a multinational Arab contingent with the unenviable task of subduing the militant remnants of Hamas.

For the latter, controlling the southern half of Gaza, disarming Hamas and providing humanitarian aid and medical support — all while initiating reconstruction — will be a Herculean task. The Arab force should be under command of a three-star general from one of the nations involved, and will need at least 30,000 troops to have any chance of cutting off Hamas.

As Trump said of Hamas, "If they don't disarm, we will disarm them." Good. But doing so will require a big lift from the U.S. military, and an even bigger one from Arab partners and other allies. It represents the only possible path to peace.

Stavridis is a Bloomberg columnist, retired U.S. Navy admiral, former supreme allied commander of NATO and vice chairman of global affairs at the Carlyle Group.