

**Cottage Grove Sentinel**  
 116 N. Sixth St.  
 Cottage Grove, Ore. 97424

# Opinion

**The First Amendment**  
 Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

"I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend." —Thomas Jefferson (1800)



## LETTERS

### LOCAL OFFICIALS MUST EVALUATE EQUITY

George Floyd died in police custody in Minneapolis more than two weeks ago, sparking protests and calls for justice in Lane County and across the country.

The members of the League of Women Voters of Lane County join in solidarity with community members and our fellow Leaguers nationwide grieving George Floyd's death.

We call on Minnesota law enforcement officials to ensure transparency during their investigation, and to seek justice for George Floyd, his family and his community.

We acknowledge the anger and anguish so many of us are feeling, in particular the Black community and other communities of color already experiencing disproportionate impacts from COVID-19 as a result of systemic racism.

We urge government officials in Lane County and Oregon to listen to communities of color and to adopt meaningful reforms that will address systemic racism, the heart of these tragic killings that disproportionately target Black people.

Elected officials must be responsive to the calls for change that have long gone unheard.

We also ask local officials to continuously evaluate programs and services, including police

use of force, to ensure our own communities are protecting human and civil rights.

Every American — every Oregonian — must be willing to stand against racism and oppression, and to support individuals, organizations and leaders working for change. We cannot afford to lose focus. We must re-commit ourselves to addressing injustice in our systems and institutions, and to increasing our efforts at building equitable communities where everyone feels safe and is treated humanely.

—Charlcie R. Kaylor, President  
 League of Women Voters  
 of Lane County

### WE MUST LEARN FROM OUR PAST FOR BETTER FUTURE

I believe that we need to educate our younger generations about past protests, riots and killing in our nation.

Everyone should go onto the internet and search them out to educate themselves about cause and effect — something that should have been taught in school:

- Watts Riots in 1965 — South Central Los Angeles.
- Chicago 1968 Democratic Presidential Convention
- Kent State 1970
- "LA 92" The Documentary: The aftermath of Rodney King

Until we know what went on before, we will not be able to understand and fix what comes ahead of us.

—Winford Jolle  
 Cottage Grove

### PROTESTS ARE ABOUT MORE THAN POLICE POLICIES

I believe everyone condemns the looters and rioters; I know I do.

But the looters should not be confused with the tens if not hundreds of thousands of peaceful protesters who see inequality in this country and want it to end.

The property destruction is bad, but it is also bad that the looting gives people permission to ignore the real issue.

Although George Floyd was the flashpoint, the real issue is not exclusively Floyd's death but rather the systemic racism in the American criminal justice system, in education and in employment; it's not just about the police.

What about the woman who called 9-1-1 because an African-American birdwatcher asked her to leash her dog? How about Ahmaud Arbery, the man who was murdered by three vigilantes when he was out jogging?

Anyone paying attention to the news knows I could give too many other examples. It's easy to support the police, who by and large deserve our support.

It's much harder to take an honest look at our society, acknowledge the inequalities and vow to do something about it.

We've heard the point of view of a white male. Perhaps the point of view of a person of color would now be appropriate.

—Vic Phalbin  
 Cottage Grove

### Letters to the Editor Policy

The Sentinel welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Letters that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or without documentation will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside The Sentinel readership area will only be published at the discretion of the editor.

### Political/Election Letters:

Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.

Letters must: 1) Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates; 2) Ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay; and 3) explain the reasons to support candidates based on personal experience and perspective rather than partisanship and campaign-style rhetoric.

Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this constitutes paid political advertising.

As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher, general manager and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn't follow the above criteria.

### Send letters to:

nhickson@cgsentinel.com

## HOW TO CONTACT YOUR REPS

### Oregon state representatives

• **Sen. Floyd Prozanski**  
 District 4 State Senator  
 PO Box 11511  
 Eugene, Ore. 97440  
 Phone: 541-342-2447  
 Email: sen.floydprozanski@state.or.us

• **Rep. Cedric Hayden**  
 Republican District 7 State Representative  
 900 Court St. NE  
 Salem, Ore. 97301  
 Phone: 503-986-1407  
 Website: www.leg.state.or.us/hayden  
 Email: rep.cedrichayden@state.or.us

### Oregon federal representatives

• **Rep. Peter DeFazio**  
 (House of Representatives)  
 405 East 8th Ave.  
 #2030  
 Eugene, Ore. 97401  
 Email: defazio.house.gov/contact/email-peter  
 Phone: 541-465-6732

• **Sen. Ron Wyden**  
 405 East 8th Ave., Suite 2020  
 Eugene, Ore. 97401  
 Email: wyden.senate.gov  
 Phone: (541) 431-0229

• **Sen. Jeff Merkley**  
 Email: merkley.senate.gov  
 Phone: 541-465-6750

# Cottage Grove Sentinel

541-942-3325

### Administration

Jenna Bartlett, Group Publisher

Gary Manly, General Manager... Ext. 1207  
 gmanly@cgsentinel.com

Gerald Santana, Multi-Media Sales Consultant... Ext. 1216  
 gsantana@cgsentinel.com  
 Carla Skeel, Inside Multi-Media Sales Consultant... Ext. 1203  
 csummers@cgsentinel.com

### Editorial

Ned Hickson, Managing Editor... 541-902-3520  
 nhickson@cgsentinel.com

Damien Sherwood, Lead Reporter... Ext. 1212  
 dsherwood@cgsentinel.com

Nick Snyder, Sports/Community News Reporter... Ext. 1204  
 nsnyder@cgsentinel.com

### Customer Service

Meg Fringer, Office Manager, Legals, Classifieds... Ext. 1200  
 mfringer@cgsentinel.com

### Production

Ron Annis, Production Supervisor... Ext.1215  
 graphics@cgsentinel.com

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Periodicals postage paid at Cottage Grove, Oregon.  
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