

# The Sunday Oregonian

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## Reader views

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### **Felons should forfeit public pensions**

It is deeply disturbing that the officer who killed George Floyd in Minnesota, if convicted, will be able to keep a public pension worth an estimated million dollars while Minnesota taxpayers would be on the hook for paying his prison costs.

Like Minnesota, Oregon is one of about half the states in the nation with no public pension forfeiture law in place when a public employee is convicted of a felony in the course of their public work. We need to address that as a matter of fairness and accountability.

As the Legislature works to tackle police accountability during this unprecedented time of calls for reforms, I believe that the concept of pension forfeiture for any public employee who is convicted of a crime that was committed in the course of their public employment should be part of those reforms. Whether it's a teacher who sexually abuses a child, a city manager who embezzles money, or an officer involved in a shooting, if they are convicted, they shouldn't reap the reward of a taxpayer funded pension.

As vice-chair of the Oregon Senate Judiciary Committee and a member of the Special Session Committee, I'm committed to working with my colleagues to ensure Oregon joins with those states that protect the public in this manner. It's incumbent on us all to work toward much-needed reforms.

*Kim Thatcher*

*Thatcher is a state senator representing District 13 and is the Republican nominee for Oregon secretary of state.*