

OPINION *This piece expresses the views of its author(s), separate from those of this publication.*

Letters to the editor for Sept. 20, 2020

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Support families

Throughout the pandemic, the Florida Coalition for Children and Florida's child welfare agencies have supported youth in foster care during a very uncertain time. The COVID-19 pandemic has added additional stress to the foster care system, which staff and partners of Partnership for Strong Families have witnessed firsthand.

Through it all, much has also been done to keep children from entering foster care. At Partnership for Strong Families' Resource Centers, families receive support to meet their emergency needs while staff develop long-term plans to keep families resilient.

Our ability to help them meet their concrete needs through community support is vital. By providing assistance in the form of rent, utilities, access to food and other emergency needs, we are able to mitigate the effects of the pandemic for families, ultimately keeping families strong and children safe.

To learn more about how you can help keep local youth safe, visit www.pfsf.org.

Pebbles Edelman, senior vice president of clinical and community services, Partnership for Strong Families

Students should register

It's no secret that my generation, Gen Z, grew up in a unique point in time. Code Red drills, virtual proms, the 2008 crash, Sept. 11 — all of these events have shaped America's largest and most diverse generation into a group with views as unique as these pivotal moments in U.S. history.

Yet when it comes to expressing those views at the ballot box, we don't show up in numbers that reflect our generation's size. In fact, 18- to 24-year-olds consistently have the lowest voter turnout when compared to older age demographics.

Florida PIRG Students want to alleviate that issue. We at Florida PIRG Students ask that you register to vote at studentvote.org and talk to your friends about registering.

It takes just a few minutes and might make all of the difference. Let's make sure our voices are heard in November!

Kelly Young, High Springs

Religious discrimination

As Congressman Bobby Scott pointed out in the American's United Summit that I recently attended online, the victim of religious discrimination used to be the person being discriminated against, but is now being distorted into the person who is not being allowed to discriminate.

To counter the many encroachments on our true religious freedom in recent years, Bobby Scott and Joe Kennedy have co-sponsored a bill called the "Do No Harm Bill." Two hundred members of Congress and 30 senators have already endorsed this bill. Only a few more are needed to ensure that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act returns to its original purpose, providing a shield to protect — not a sword to harm others.

I only hope that our own Florida legislators realize that the people of this state are tired of religious discrimination/persecution and endorse this bill.

Janet Humphreys, Gainesville

Better judgment needed

Maybe I've been watching too many western reruns, but I wonder if the police are trained to kill instead of wound in all cases Black or white. In recent cases it seems to me the killing could easily have been avoided when someone is on the ground or running away on such minor offenses that are not always proven.

It just seems the police could use better judgment and training to prevent all these demonstrations and rioting that always follows.

Defunding the police is not the answer for justice. However, we do need law and order. The left has allowed things to get out of control.

Tom Pennisi, Gainesville

Write a letter

Letters to the editor should be emailed to letters@gainesville.com. Letters should be 150 words or fewer and include the writer's full name, city of residence and contact information.