To the Editor:

While I’m hard pressed to think of a single time Mary Williams Walsh has ever published a balanced, let alone positive, thought on public pensions, her latest column is jaw-droppingly crass. ("Coronavirus Is Making the Public Pension Crisis Even Worse," April 2, 2020) In the middle of a crisis, when people are dead and dying and nations are spending tens of trillions of dollars to beat back a pandemic, her contribution to the public discourse is that the public pension sky is falling.

News flash: Governments and businesses are working frantically against a health threat no one yet fully understands while tirelessly endeavoring to stabilize the global economy. In the midst of it, however, public pensions continue to do our part. Pension systems are issuing checks as they always do, providing stable income to retirees, powering spending in communities, and providing revenue to governments. They are a source of calm and confidence in the midst of chaos. All this is happening at a time when the stability that pensions provide is in woefully short supply.

The very essence of public pensions is long-term thinking. Pensions are in it for the long haul. For a more than 150 years, public pensions have steadily delivered modest but reliable retirement income to millions of dedicated public servants like the nurses, doctors, and EMS personnel who are on the coronavirus frontlines. Pensions have withstood and rebounded from crisis after crisis. Their focus right now is on helping members through the turmoil and delivering on their promises.

If Ms. Walsh’s contribution is to report on the trumped-up “crisis” within public pensions, maybe she should take a breath and save precious space in The New York Times for truly valuable reporting on the coronavirus crisis.

Respectfully,

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