

Testimony from Irene Kalonji of Pacific Northwest Family Circle on LC-49, LC-78, LC-79, LC-80, LC-81, LC-83:

Hello. My name is Irene Kalonji. I live in Clackamas County. I speak today on behalf of Pacific Northwest Family Circle. This is a multi-racial group of Families whose Loved Ones were murdered by police. We work to end police violence. For example, I testified before the Oregon legislature when it passed Senate Bill 505 to require recording of grand jury proceedings.

I am the Mother of 19-year-old Loved One Christopher Kalonji who was murdered by Clackamas County sheriffs in his bedroom during a mental health crisis. Knowing police were on the way, he had intentionally stripped down to his underwear to prove that he was unarmed, in hopes that they wouldn't kill him because he was Black.

PNWFC works in Oregon and Washington to educate the public and end police violence by working on laws, policies and more. We were founded on a core belief. Everyone whose Loved One was murdered by police and who struggles for justice has lived experience that is needed by lawmakers. Some of us have even become experts on the criminal legal system. On this topic, Families are experts in our own lived experience. We're eager to share this wisdom. Please invite us into the formal process of forming and passing police accountability legislation in Oregon.

In case I get cut off, I first want to say, all of these bills assume that officers are working without bias and with good intent. None of these bills seems to recognize that most officers are deeply biased against Black and Indigenous people, people

with mental and physical disabilities, immigrants, people experiencing houselessness, and youth. All of the Loved Ones in our organization have one or more of these statuses. Police officers' attitudes come directly from the laws that they are asked to enforce, from their own inner echo chamber, and from mainstream culture in the United States.

On LC-49 to prohibit an officer from being reinstated: We agree with Portland Copwatch when they say, "The bill specifically says it only applies in cases where the arbitrator agrees misconduct occurred. The reason most firings are overturned in serious cases is because arbitrators do not agree with the findings." We support working with Portland Copwatch and others to close this loophole. After you fix that, require every police force to include firing an officer as an option for discipline, including revoking the peace officer's license. Anything less, and the officer will get a job somewhere else and could injure or kill more community members.

In 100% of the over 380 cases where police killed a community member in Oregon, officers have either not been punished or didn't stay punished. If officers know there are no serious consequences for their behavior, then officers will continue to do whatever they want to do, whenever they want to do it.

On LC-78 to create a statewide database of officers' misconduct: We have called for a statewide database to track officer misconduct in the past and support this effort. Unfortunately, if an officer is fired but the police officer's license is not revoked or attempted to be revoked, the officer and their misconduct will not appear on this database. We want to see all misconduct cases listed in a publicly

available statewide database, regardless of whether the issue rises to the level of licensure and certification. Clearly, agencies in addition to the DPSST need to be required to add information and manage this database. We would like to see information published promptly, not over a 12-month period.

We feel this is one way to shame police into not killing community members and we need this information in a timely fashion.

On LC-79 for the Department of Justice to investigate and potentially prosecute cases where officers are accused of causing serious injury or death to a community member: If a non-police officer resident killed someone, they would be tried in a regular court of law with a jury of their peers. Officers should go through the same transparent process.

Unfortunately, the Graham vs. Connor Supreme Court decision grants officers immunity as long as they say they were afraid for their lives. This federal law ensures the upward trend of more deaths of people like my son. Therefore, this bill is likely to have little beneficial effect in that regard.

We do support the tracking and publishing of demographic data on Loved Ones murdered by police described in Section 4. Please add the names of the officers who killed the person and other officers on the scene and their police departments to the list of information tracked and published in the murder of community members.

On LC-80 to force officers to intervene with other officers: In the case of my son's murder by police, Portland officers stood by while an officer beat Christopher's

head on their car because he knew his rights and tried to tell them so. They said they didn't like his attitude. They booked him for a court date for Jan 28, 2016. On that day, Christopher experienced a mental health crisis that led to his murder by Clackamas County sheriffs in our home.

The code of silence among police officers already violates the standard operating procedures of most police departments. Even so, officers continue to protect each other. This law should be passed, but will be useless unless LC-49 is passed with our recommendation to add firing to the discipline matrix and revoke the peace officer's license.

On LC-81 prohibiting officers from using a limited range of munitions: Judges recently put a 14 day stay on Portland police to keep them from using tear gas on protestors in Portland. Police responded with increased physical violence. They bring Multnomah County police officers in the cars with them to do things that Portland police aren't allowed to do. At least this bill would cover all law enforcement agencies. This bill will not be effective unless it passes along with LC-49 and LC-78. There must be fear of real consequences to change police culture.

On LC-83 to prevent police officers from choking people: No one should be killed by police. Everyone has a right to live. And under U.S. law, people are suspects in a crime until proven guilty by a jury of their peers. A loophole here allows officers to choke people to death if they have "attempted a felony". This is unacceptable. When officers kill Loved Ones, they are acting as arresting officer, district attorney, judge, jury, and executioner. In case of PNWFC Loved Ones, police murders have happened in up to 3 hours down to less than 30 seconds.

To close, it is your responsibility to protect us from police violence. Knowing what you know today about policing in Oregon, are you really willing to take responsibility for state-sponsored murder of your constituents?

These bills need a lot more input from community members. Rushing to pass bills to make you look responsive will not prevent more Loved Ones from being killed by police in Oregon. It will just get you re-elected.

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