

Oregon Legislature Joint Committee on Transparent Policing and Use of Force Reform

We must ban the use of teargas on our streets.

Please listen to the voices of Black community leaders who speak to fundamentally transform our systems of public safety.

Tear gas has been banned for warfare since 1925. Still, it remains one of the most extensively used “riot control” agents. It has transient as well as lasting, severe, and sometimes life-threatening effects on skin, respiratory systems, and eyes. Police, demonstrators, bystanders, and secondarily-exposed health care workers have been [harmed by exposure to CS](#).

During a pandemic of respiratory disease, it is excessively reckless to expose people in a crowd to lung irritants.

Furthermore, one in ten people in Oregon has asthma, with disproportionate rates among Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). Using tear gas arbitrarily puts BIPOC and others with varying levels of health vulnerability, such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), at risk of serious life-threatening illness.

If we are a society who cares about our most vulnerable populations, teargas has no place on our streets. If we are a community of anti-racists, teargas has no place on our streets.

Thank you.
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