

I am a retired ophthalmologist and write to demand that Tear Gas is outlawed in Oregon and demand that it is never used on people in Oregon in the future.

Tear gas is a chemical weapon of war. When Law Enforcement Officers use it, they are treating citizens as the enemy--- as if they are in a war with us. All enforcement personnel -- federal, state and local -- work for us, the citizens. NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND. They should not harm us. It is immoral that they choose to use a weapon of war to control citizens, much as an invading army would do. Their mindset needs to change and they must become our protectors, our helpers, instead of choosing to harm our bodies because they don't agree that we protest unjust laws and policies, or because we protest against their well documented brutality in their "forces" at the federal, state and local levels.

The Oregon Legislature can help force the proper "culture change" that is now required in Law Enforcement at all levels--by outlawing the use of a weapon of war against citizens in Oregon--by outlawing Tear Gas. I understand that HB 4208 still allows the use of Tear Gas in a riot. I am opposed to this provision and I want it removed.

Tear gas harms the eyes, nasal passages, skin, lungs, bronchi. Exposure to it can cause permanent harm to these structures and their physiology (how they work), and can even cause death. It is particularly harmful to anyone with some underlying eye disorders, people who have had glaucoma surgery, or anyone with lung disorders such as Asthma or Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease. Glaucoma exists in Black Americans at a higher rate than in the white population. Asthma and Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease exist at a higher rate in People Of Color due to systemic racism which has prevented these under-served groups from obtaining appropriate medical care, and due to systemic environmental racism which has encouraged corporations to build plants that pollute the air, water, and soil in the neighborhoods of people of color. ALL OF THIS IS RELATED.

Tear gas ALWAYS causes harm. It harms those it is intended to harm. It harms bystanders, police, and the medical personnel who are required to aid those who have been harmed. It is of particular harm to vulnerable populations: People of Color due to systemic medical racism, and systemic environmental racism.

Tear Gas is a chemical of warfare. It must be completely outlawed in Oregon.

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