

Hello,

I am a native Oregonian originally from Burns and have lived in the Portland area for over ten years. In my time in Portland, I've attained an Associate's Degree from Portland Community College and a Bachelor's Degree from Portland State University. I pay yearly taxes to the somewhat aggressive tax authority in Oregon. I am happy to do so, when I know that money is going to benefit me and my fellow Oregonians.

Over the last few years, I've become keenly aware of the overall incompetence, negligence and brutality of the Portland Police Bureau, the Portland Police Association, and the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office. It seems as though law enforcement, not just in Portland but obviously in Oregon and nationwide, is grossly ill equipped to safely and justly respond to the tasks that we require of them. And even worse, they shirk and aggressively obstruct any attempt to hold offending officers accountable for fatal and flagrant misconduct.

This is nowhere near the society I want to live in. As I write to you now, PPB along with federal officers from DHS are igniting flash bangs against protesters a few blocks away from my apartment in downtown Portland. While I do not condone violent protests I am much more offended, appalled and disgusted by state sponsored violence like the kind perpetrated by the officers currently roaming the streets of Portland. The tensions within the community since the Black Live Matter protests that have exploded after the death of George Floyd have only been exacerbated by the law enforcement response in many cases.

Our current situation is reflective of much bigger systemic injustices built into law enforcement, incarceration, and mental health institutions in this country. This moment posits an opportunity for broad reflection on how we want law enforcement and incarceration to function in our society. So much of how laws are enforced and interpreted through the lens of white supremacy. In some instances, how laws are actually designed are inherently racist. Currently, how we go about abating the ills of our society is through foolishly throwing money at the bluntest tool we have, which is law enforcement.

We require the police to remedy all aspects of our societal issues; a broad range of which they are ill equipped to even tackle. Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result.

Our collective irrationality is on full display right now.

It is beyond obvious at this point to make some drastic changes to how we want law enforcement to function in our society. We must defund state and municipal police bureaus and reallocate funding to mental health resources, domestic violence resources, houseless resources, affordable housing, public education, and addiction treatments. We must continue to dismantle the drug war, decriminalize all drug possession and support harm reduction services. We must bring humanity to incarceration and work towards the complete abolishment of the prison-industrial complex. We MUST hold police officers responsible for breaking the law, supporting racist movements, and killing members of our community.

Law enforcement has killed many people in my time in Portland, a disproportionate number of those people were Black Americans. Here are just a few of those people off the top of my head: James Chaase, Kendra James, Aaron Campbell, Quanice Hayes, Patrick Kimmons, & Jason Washington. When we assess the state of police brutality in Portland, we should also consider the 19 people on average that the Portland Police shoot each year who don't die. We should consider the many people assaulted by the police during everyday interactions as well at protests. We should consider the non-violent young man shot in the head with "less than lethal"

ammunition requiring reconstructive surgery two nights ago at a protest near the Justice Center. We should consider all of this and more when we envision the society we want to live in.

To close this testimony, along with my previously stated demands, I implore you to END QUALIFIED IMMUNITY in Oregon. This alone has the potential to truly bring accountability to law enforcement even if we can't immediately solve the inherently bigoted systemic issues. I also implore you to BAN THE USE OF TEAR GAS, CHEMICAL WEAPONS, AND "NON_LETHAL" AMMUNITION by law enforcement for protest management or crowd control.

Thank you,
C. Crespin
Portland , OR
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