As a Portland, OR resident, I have had a first hand view of the protests and police response.

The protests have largely been peaceful with huge numbers of residents turning out night after night. And each night, protests against police violence are met with increasing police violence. Police and now Feds are escalating conflicts. This is not helping anyone.

Why should police protect property by harming citizens? How is rubber bullets, tear gas, and pepper spray a correct response to supposed water bottles thrown at fully armored police? How can anyone use chemical agents against our citizens any time, let alone during a respiratory pandemic?

Take away military grade weapons and tools.

Defund the police and move that money into local organizations that are ALREADY providing community services.

Change who responds to most 911 calls - mental health professionals, community care workers, roadside assistance, EMTs, conflict mediators, etc instead of cops.

Stop all use of tear gas and rubber bullets by police.

Prohibit police from deciding what is a protest vs a riot.

Remove all Gang Task forces (or whatever they're calling themselves now).

Now that Marijauna is legal, let's free and clear records of every prisoner who was charged for an offense that is no longer illegal.

Police are good at one thing. Violence. As long as we continue to use police to respond to every situation, it's always going to create more violence. There are other options. We have moved money away from them in favor of militarizing our police. We can change this. Let's not stop at transparency, but let's remove the bulk of the power that police have to terrorize our Black and Brown communities.

Thank you,

Karen Goetsch