

Hello,

I demand that tear gas be banned completely in Oregon. With the "riot" exemption, HB 4208 does not go far enough to protect the health, safety, and first amendment rights of all Oregonians. In the past years and weeks, we have seen police stretch what constitutes a riot. We have also seen that police will not be challenged or held accountable for using tear gas in a situation that does not truly meet the definition of a riot. Police must de-escalate protests instead of moving to seriously injure people.

Tear gas is dangerous to the health of protestors, police, bystanders, first responders, and people in nearby buildings. Tear gas has been banned in warfare for almost a century, yet we allow our police to wage illegal warfare on our streets. The legislature needs to follow the demands of Black community leaders to transform our safety mechanisms and protect the health of BIPOC Oregonians. Black Oregonians have disproportionately high rates of respiratory issues that can make tear gas lethal.

Take out the riot exemption and completely ban tear gas in Oregon.

Thank you,
Emily Freilich
The Dalles, OR