

I'm writing as a concerned member of the community and as a healthcare provider.

Tear gas is a universally harmful, poisonous weapon which indiscriminately hurts any human or animal in its vicinity, and disproportionately hurts those who are more vulnerable.

- One in ten people in Oregon has asthma, with tragically higher rates among Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). Arbitrarily using tear gas puts people with respiratory or immune health conditions, such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), at risk of serious life-threatening illness.
- During a pandemic of respiratory disease, it is excessively reckless to expose people in a crowd to lung irritants. This is akin to an organized attack upon the public health, and should be considered a criminal offense.
- The riot exemption is a free license to attack any group of people in public; it must be removed. Police in Oregon have been known to abuse this exemption to deploy tear gas on protesters. Peaceful protest -- heck, even rowdy protest -- is not reasonable or sufficient cause for attacking the people of the community with a massively poisonous weapon.
- A tear gas ban is the obvious choice for public health and safety.

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Oriol K. Zemko

they/them/theirs pronouns

*Feed two birds from one scone...*

Gender neutral and nonviolent language are always appreciated.