

Good morning,

My name is Danielle. I am a nursing student from Grants Pass, Oregon. I am writing to voice my support for the following police reform measures in Oregon; and here is why:

**LC742-** The use of CS Gas and other chemical aerosols are dangerous to the health and safety of our community. Not only to those participating in the protests, but also anyone within the vicinity. The fact that law enforcement has been using excessive amounts of CS gas in the midst of a pandemic that largely affects respiratory function, and often without warning, is unacceptable. There needs to be more regulation around the use of these dangerous chemicals. Stricter regulation is also needed around the use of “less lethal munition”, which has been used unnecessarily causing severe physical harm to protestors. Law Enforcement has proved that they cannot be trusted to decide when a protest escalates to a riot, as they have clearly used it as a means to justify using pepper spray and excessive force on people demonstrating their 1<sup>st</sup> amendment rights. Hopefully, requiring the mayor to make this determination will provide more control over the use of these weapons.

**LC743-** Law enforcement officers need to be held accountable for their actions. Recently, they have made this increasingly difficult by using tape to cover their names and/or badge numbers. This makes it near impossible for victims of excessive force and civil rights violations to file a complaint against their abuser (LE). Thus, perpetuating continued police violence. Moving forward, names, badge numbers, and names of departments need to be clearly displayed on law enforcement uniforms and vehicles.

**LC744-** Law enforcement officers should be required to hold each other accountable. First and foremost, if a police officer witnesses misconduct at the hands of another officer, they should intervene. It is their job to uphold the law, so if they witness an officer acting outside of the law, it is their responsibility to intervene. If they did, George Floyd and countless others would still be alive. At the very least, if they do not intervene, they should be required to report the misconduct. I am shocked that this isn't already a requirement. While this is a step in the right direction, it only requires that misconduct be reported and investigated, it does not ensure that misconduct is penalized. Since law enforcement investigates itself, police officers are rarely held accountable for misconduct. For true accountability, we need an outside agency to investigate reports against police officers.

**LC745** – For obvious reasons, choke holds should be banned altogether.

**LC746** – In our current system, even when both the police chief and the mayor want to fire a police officer, it can be challenged by the police union, and subsequently overturned by an arbitrator. Making it extremely challenging to hold police officers accountable for grave acts of misconduct such as, inappropriate use of deadly force. Which again, perpetuates police violence as they are not held accountable. LC746 “Specifies that arbitrator may not make determination of misconduct that differs from agency determination of misconduct if evidence on the record would permit a reasonable person to conclude that the officer engaged in the alleged misconduct”. So hopefully, LC746 would help with this problem. Standardizing police discipline statewide may also help. If police officers knew exactly what their punishment would be, maybe it would deter them from using excessive/deadly force. Although, as mentioned above, for true accountability we need an outside agency to investigate reports of police violence/misconduct.

**LC748** – In an effort to deter police violence, police misconduct should be documented and made public. When citizens break the law their names and alleged offences are made public, the same should be true

for law enforcement. Police should be held publicly accountable, just like everybody else. If police misconduct and excessive use of force were tracked, then maybe we could get rid of the “bad apples” who have repeated offenses.

While these measures are a good start, many of them will not matter if law enforcement continue to find themselves not guilty of misconduct through self-investigation. Police should not be investigating themselves. We need an independent agency to conduct allegations made against the police.

Thank you for your time.

Danielle Letson