

dear co-chairs & committee,

i'm writing you in regards to LC 742, after recovering from exposure to latent levels of teargas/chemical agents at the Justice Center on July 23, 2020 (while protesting), which caused an intense & very disturbing immune response in my body.

i spent a prolonged period of time (from about [1am](#) to the following day [at 2pm](#)) vomiting or dry heaving every 15-30 minutes, resulting in a trip to Urgent Care [at 8am](#) and then to the Emergency Room at Legacy Emanuel [at 12pm](#) when the anti-emetic prescribed at the Urgent Care did not lessen or stop my symptoms. i was extremely dehydrated from throwing up & in systemic shock from the exposure & bodily reaction. i was given 8 different prescription medications total, including an antipsychotic which can ease nerve, neural, & endocrine disruption, and TWO IVs. within 30 minutes after being given the first IV, i threw up a whopping 32oz of bile; i was in a state of severe dehydration already at that point [from 15hrs](#) of throwing up.

at the point where i vomited after my first IV, i had already been administered several different antiemetics that were unsuccessful at getting me to stop vomiting. then, in tandem with my second IV i was given the antipsychotic and another intravenous antiemetic, as well as a prescription numbing agent which i had to drink. throughout my many hours in the ER i had difficulty, especially during my second IV, keeping my eyes open/feeling clear headed in answering questions that the ER staff was asking- the only sensation i can liken that period of difficulty keeping myself awake/responsive to is when i have had a severe concussion. once during a short conversation with an ER dr, i uncontrollably vomited all over myself and my blanket. i did not have the ability to urinate more than a forced tbsp for a urine sample in over 20hrs. by the 18th hour after my symptoms began and the 11th hour after first going to Urgent Care that morning [at 8am](#), something finally worked in the series of drugs i was given & i finally stopped vomiting.

after several days of rest, i am now physically feeling pretty restored but i (and some of my friends who have monitored me/been around me during this time) have noticed some funny cognitive difficulties such as trouble finding normal words when i am talking or frantically searching for my sunglasses & being told i am wearing them-i had touched my face to check if they were on & i was not able to register/feel that they were until i was told by someone else. i also started my menstrual cycle 4 days early (i hve never gotten my period more than half a day early, it was heavier and very painful compared to normal, and i've continued to have random spotting & cramping for over a week after finishing my cycle which i have never experienced.

i am concerned from my own experience about others- those who are exposed to more directly deployed chemical exposure, in addition to the toxic remainders that linger after chemicals are deployed. as far as i know i was never directly gassed while i was at the protest, and i believe the response i had was to the many residual chemicals in the air & on the ground near the Justice Center. while i was there, i, & other protestors, noticed we had symptoms of tear gas exposure, even though none was visibly being deployed at the time. the symptoms worsened if we stood in certain areas, particularly on the dirt/ground vs. the paved ground or sidewalk.

my Dr told me that they (possibly the city?) had washed tear gas off the paved areas that day and i feel strongly that the symptoms were worse in the soil/ground because all of the chemical residue had been washed from the paved areas into the soil. i worry for the houseless population and folks who have offices and apartments which are being exposed to daily doses & buildup of inhumane chemicals, as well as those who knowingly choose to risk their safety daily in the name of Justice and Democracy in dissent to the disgusting and frightening dictator-like police/federal state violence our city & country is subject to. i feel strongly that the chemicals being used are unsafe & that there is enough residue alone at (& nearby) the JC to cause a severe immune reaction, nerve damage, & systemic shock, especially if you have compromised immunity or autoimmune disease (which i do), i think about those who are not even partaking in this protest or aware of their exposure & the health risks.

chemical agents have been deployed like exterminator without restraint & can remain on surfaces/suspended in the air for many days, possibly weeks. many of the empty cans found are expired, which means they can be more damaging & potent. the cdc & other "official" sources downplay that chemical agents can have lasting, very serious effects, which primarily target the respiratory system, making viral spread easier & increasing risks associated with covid. i have read that if chemical weapons catch fire they can cause more severe effects to those exposed to the ignited chemicals in the air. i can't help but ruminate on the fact that chemical weapons have been illegal for use in WAR since 1925, but are still legal to use in civilian-law enforcement disputes that are deemed "rioting", and i think about who the rioting demographic tends to be in our country- often poor & oppressed people.

i look to portland as a very white city with a lot of middle-class (and above) privilege, and i hope that my, & others, experience can inform others to be more protected, as well as inform a change to the law so that chemical weaponry is never ever allowed to be used again on civilians.

i urge any agencies that are capable to advocate for testing/do testing ASAP & for the city to hold the police & federal agencies accountable for their actions to harm civilians, and i hope there is support (& reform of force) for the MANY people visibly & internally injured in this time of necessary protest.

in care & seriousness,

maya rose