

Hello, as a community organizer and activist, I am deeply disturbed by our current state of policing both within Oregon and in the United States as a whole. The proposed changes to law enforcement being discussed in this session are absolutely necessary. As we have witnessed in Portland in the past 2 months, peaceful protesters are being assaulted by local and federal police officers in military-grade gear who approach them with weapons of war and treat them as enemy combatants. Many have been seriously injured or permanently disabled. Although chokeholds and the deployment of tear gas have been largely prohibited in the state of Oregon, both methods are still allowed with exceptions with their employment to be used at the officer's discretion. The use of force at the discretion of police officers has been perhaps the most serious issue within the system of policing with officer discretion leading recently to the numerous deaths of unarmed black and people of color, and the brutalization of demonstrators and journalists. Continuing to allow these lethal loopholes to exist at all have already cost lives and will continue to take lives if we fail to completely end them. I urge you now to take the first steps toward ending the violent police state and putting Oregon on the right side of history.

Thank you,

Maggie Myers