



STATEMENT RE: LC 742

(MUNITIONS REGULATIONS)

To: Joint Committee On Transparent Policing and Use of Force Reform
From: Michael Selvaggio, Oregon Coalition of Police and Sheriffs
Date: July 28, 2020

Co-Chairs and Members of the Joint Committee:

For the record, my name is Michael Selvaggio, representing the Oregon Coalition of Police and Sheriffs (ORCOPS). For your consideration on LC 742, which variously regulates certain police munitions, we ask for some clarification as to the Legislative intent and a possible adjustment.

In the previous Special Session, ORCOPS noted that on many occasions, law enforcement officers have saved lives by using “tear gas” or similar types of CS gas to draw an armed, barricaded suspect away from an innocent victim. Is it in fact the Committee’s intent to ban the use of tear gas even in these scenarios? We are concerned that completely banning the use of “tear gas” in these situations would put more lives at risk -- of officers, victims, and suspects.

Generally speaking, we respectfully request that allowances be made for circumstances in which such nonlethal tools would provide a universally safer alternative to the use of physical force in close quarters. Removing nonlethal tools like “chemical incapacitants” or “kinetic impact projectiles” undercuts decades of work to add nonlethal tools to policing so that police officers aren’t left with deadly force as their only option. De-escalation necessarily involves nonlethal tools being available.

Also, please consider an allowance to use sound trucks for the purpose of communicating the announcements that are required prior to the use of permitted irritants.

Lastly, I am sure the Committee is aware -- though I want to state for the record -- many of the instigating events that seem to be the impetus for this legislation are actions taken by federal officers, which this legislation will not affect.