

To members of the Legislature's police reform committee:

I'm writing to express my alarm at changes made to the original draft of LC 742, proposed limits to the tools law enforcement officials can use on crowds.

This bill originally included measures that I strongly support. It:

- Banned tear gas and all other chemical weapons
- Blocked the use of most impact projectiles
- Mandated that medics be called to all protests if police are.
- Underscored that medics and members of the press have special rights in protests and police cannot interfere with them
- Allowed injured protesters to sue the police
- Created a fund that would pay for basic legal fees

In reviewing the current draft language, I see that all of those aspects of the bill have been deleted. I object to the changes, which:

- Allow police to fire chemical weapons and impact projectiles at people as long as they're not aimed at the head
- Make it much more difficult for injured protesters to sue
- No longer afford special privileges to the press, medics and legal observers
- Eliminate the supportive fund for legal fees

As Oregonians pursue their right of free assembly, we need these additional protections to keep us safe and diminish the chances that violence will escalate among protesters and law enforcement officials. Especially in the midst of a pandemic, we need to ban chemical weapons that can decimate our lung health. And to protect our democracy, we need the media, legal observers and medics to be able to freely operate at protest sites.

I urge you to reconsider these ill-advised changes to LC 742. Please make sure this legislation delivers on its original intent: De-escalating violence while protecting our state's democratic ideals.

Thank you,

Jill Martin

Southeast Portland