

## Testimony on LC 17 from Melissa Shea

To Chairpersons Manning , Bynum and members of the committee,

My name is Melissa Shea and I have been a Portland resident for over 12 years. I currently sit on the board and volunteer for a non profit that directly serves folks living in low income and transitional housing in downtown Portland. Our focus is to provide and promote community for folks living in these buildings (which are often very isolating), as well as assisting in getting folks health care, food, rental support, and transportation. Many of the residents that reside in these downtown Portland properties have been houseless at some point, are veterans, have dealt with addiction, are suffering from and/or treating mental health issues such as: PTSD, depression, anxiety, trauma.

The effects of Covid-19 hit this community extra hard. What was already a pretty isolating life style became a more extreme version. It is cited by the medical field that side effects of isolation and loneliness may include but not limited too: extreme depression, anxiety, loss of sleep, paranoia, and schizophrenia. For many folks the pandemic doubled down on these preexisting conditions.

When the PPB and federal agents started showing up down town, gassing protesters, setting off sound bombs and using LRAD to disperse and discourage crowds, they were also traumatizing vulnerable communities living in such housing, not to mention the houseless. These tactics being used by PPB not only affect Portlanders that are part of direct action protesting, they are causing extreme mental and physical harm to folks who are just trying to live their lives. The use of chemical weapons alone, with gasses lingering in the area for up to 4 days, is a direct attack on these communities fundamental rights. The constant and violent police presence downtown night after night is directly affecting the mental stability, health and well being of Portlanders.

The police force is supposed to protect and serve its community, but PPB is failing to do so. They not only create and escalate the violence night after night, but then are the ones we are required to call when someone has a mental health crisis! How does one help communities that are suffering from PTSD and anxiety when there are sounds and scenes of violence outside their windows night after night?

As elected officials that swore to serve all Oregonians, I am asking you to please amend LC 17 to ban the use of all chemical and sound incapacitants, smoke bombs and impact munitions. Although, offering litigation too physically injured individuals is a start, it is also very classists. This offer should extend to the folks in low income housing and the houseless whom are suffering from elevated states of mental illness due to the continual police violence in the streets. Our communities deserve, Oregonians deserve better.

Thank you for your time.

Melissa Shea