

Hearing on LC742, LC743, LC746, LC747, LC821, LC825

Co-Chairs and Members of the Joint Force Committee,

My name is Amichai Axelrod, and while I am not a resident of Oregon, I have been subject to force by various Oregon police agencies, while simply exercising my First Amendment Rights.

Under no circumstances have I ever acted in violence, or retaliated with violence, despite having been batoned in the throat, subject to CS gas kettling without an avenue for escape, rushed in a bullrun, swerved at with police motor vehicles, and having munitions pointed directly at my body and head.

There are already directives, principles, rules of engagement, and laws supposedly beholding police to ethical practices and accountability. Police forces routinely, and as a matter of course, reject these regulations for their own self-aggrandizement and perpetuation.

Please find below my brief statement on each referred portion of this hearing:

LC742 - police have, on several occasions these past near 100 days, used CS, OC, and various other crowd control munitions out of accord with "sanctioned use." Simple logic indicates that there is no ethically sanctioned use of asphyxiants and blinding agents, as they are banned by the Geneva Convention. If soldiers, whose missions are to kill each other, are barred from using it on each other, then our public servants, whose job is supposedly to "protect and serve" have no moral recourse to use such poisons on unarmed civilians. Portland Police have also failed to use such arms for so-called "sanctioned use" to prevent armed responses from far-right agitators on several dates in August, including the 15th, the 22nd, and the 29th. The police have shown their responses are biased, and ergo, they should not have access to weaponry that indiscriminately punishes non-violent protestors, and which is used discriminately per their political beliefs.

LC743 - Police have identification for accountability. The actions of Portland Police, Multnomah County Sheriffs, and various other law enforcement officers to obscure their identifying indicia is in violation to laws, rules, directives, and principles, and presents an anonymous force using violence indiscriminately - they are protected by this action by preventing even the meager independent reviews that currently exist. This practice must be barred, censured, and be cause for dismissal: if police are overly threatened by accountability, then they are free to resign their position and take a job wherein they feel more secure - by no means should these people be armed and given the protections that the police union affords them.

LC746 - as stated previously, current law allows police to supercede the common law for the rest of us and protect themselves from due process for criminal acts. A new process that has the ability to censure illicit behavior by police, and cause them to be reprimanded more heavily than the (at most) slap-on-the-wrist must be instituted, to prove that police are not above the law and are not imbued with any special rights for "serving the public."

LC747 - officer misconduct is currently obfuscated by the modern system of accountability and oversight, which prevents permanent records for use of force. Ergo, arbitration is stymied from obtaining relevant data - my position is that this committee move to provide greater transparency to the community that it serves.

LC821 - there are already regulations pertaining to the care that those in custody must be provided: including medical attention where necessary, and providing safety and security when in detention. Police have refrained from giving in-time medical care (which led to the death of Daniel "Jay" Aaronson, PPB pushed a medic first-responder out of the way from, and prevented aid for 20 minutes), as well as not providing masks or the ability to maintain physical distancing while in detention. My fear is that police will ignore new regulations as they ignore the current ones. There must be some substantial penalty to officers that violate these mandates.

LC825 - qualified immunity is a scourge of the legal system, an ill-defined resource that allows illegality by police officers, and for them to act with impunity, because it literally protects them from due process. It must be rescinded. Police that fear retribution for their actions infer that their actions are illegal, and have a no place in a force with the sacred task of the security of the community they serve.

My words here amount to an imploration that you recognize the mandate these 100 days of protest tasks you with: that the police be disempowered from assaulting the community with impunity. The national conversation demonstrates that a change in policing is more than desired, it is necessary. It is necessary to uphold "law and order" to be equitable to all the citizens of this land. You have the power to hold the police to accountability, and hope that you move to make the citizenry more secure from unwarranted police violence.

Thank you for your time, and the consideration of my position.

Sincerely,  
-Amichai Axelrod