

in support of LC 17...

I write to you in support of the legislature passing LC 17. I have been an ordained Episcopal Priest for over 40 years and am currently serving as a Chaplain at St. Charles Medical Center in Bend.

I support the legislature in passing LC 17 for the simple reason that a president ought not to be able to abuse his power and put peaceful protestors in harms way just so he can walk through Lafayette Square for a photo op in front of a church. That being said, police should be able to stop and arrest violent protestors who are burning buildings, looting shops, and destroying property in the name of "justice."

There have been many other examples of this "abuse of power" across our state in recent weeks. I was part of a peaceful protest of about 500 people in a parking lot in Bend. Our intent was to support and come alongside 2 undocumented community members who had been detained by ICE early that morning and were being held in an unmarked ICE bus without having been told their rights or why they had been detained. Later that evening 50 federal agents arrived and used tear gas and rubber bullets to "calm the crowd" and forcefully remove the two men from the ICE bus to another vehicle.

I was shocked to later read that it had been a "violent protest" and that was the reason for the use of crowd control munitions. This is simply not the case. At times the crowd knelt and at other times we sat to make it clear to everyone that we were there in peaceful protest. It was clearly an abuse of power that I believe makes it more difficult for police officers to be able to do their job and violates my constitutional right to peacefully protest.

I urge you to pass LC 17 so that we can end this kind of violence in the streets and communities of Oregon!

Thank you!

The Rev. Jack Erskine

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