

My name is Robert Erickson, I'm from Multnomah County.

To the Chair and Members of the Committee, Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak with you today about my experiences in the near 100 days of demanding police accountability in Oregon.

Having read through Bills LC17-LC20, I see genuine efforts to better protect citizens engaging in their first amendment rights, and for that I thank you.

However, I have witnessed first hand the disproportionate and willful use of violence against citizens by the various Police agencies of Multnomah County and the greater Oregon area. Too many of these bills focus on the symptoms of an unaccountable Police force, not the causes.

OHSU nurse and volunteer medic Tyler Cox wasn't recently assaulted and subsequently hospitalized by a Portland Police officer due to a lack of regulation or training. It was because the Officer lacked control of his emotions. A protestor last August didn't require surgery after Portland Officers intentionally aimed impact munitions at the back of thier head because operational regulations and rules weren't tight enough. It was because the Officers are emboldened by a culture of permission. George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, two names on the ever growing list of Black and Indiginous people who have been murdered with impunity by Police, weren't killed because the government failed to define what is justified in the line of duty. They were murdered because the government has failed to hold Police accountable to the same laws that citizens are.

In the heat of the moment, Police have demonstrated they cannot be trusted to make decisions based off of whats best for public safety. If they could, Portland wouldn't have been overrun by thousands of armed Trump supporters, resulting in a death and numerous injuries.

If Police accountability, and thus the end to nightly protests, is a priority to this Legislative Body then the only tool at your disposal is the complete and total abolition of qualified immunity.

Since choosing to take up the call of police accountability, nothing has made me feel less safe in Portland than witnessing first hand the violence born from the disdain that police have for the citizens they're supposed to serve and protect.

Any law passed that falls short of holding Police departments **and** their individual officers criminally liable for injury and death will be a total failure to the public that is suffering at the hands of police, nationwide. This I am certain of.

Thank You.

Robert Erickson