

Comment on Police Reform

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my concern about police reform in Oregon. I have lived in the Portland Metro Area and worked in Portland for the last 7 years.

In my time here, I have witnessed police behavior both with youth in marginalized communities (with whom I worked with directly) and at protests. I have seen how our police-force is ill-equipped and ill-trained, and I believe strongly that the proposed changes will only allow our police force to more easily engage in abuse of power.

RE: LC 742

Access to ways to incapacitate civilians will not allow police to use less force. Access to these weapons will simply allow police to use additional force on members of our community.

RE: LC 743

Police officers must be identifiable at all times to ensure the safety of the community and to allow independent parties to hold police accountable for their actions.

RE: LC 746

Our police force cannot be above the law and must be held accountable for their actions in the same way any other person living in our area is held accountable for theirs.

RE: LC 747

It is unacceptable for police to harm arrestees. Allowing police to abuse members of the public in custody undermines the assertion that the main function of our police department is to ensure the safety of our communities.

RE: LC 821

Police misconduct and crimes committed by police officers must be a matter of public record. Our communities have the right to know the actions of the police department. If the goal of the police department is indeed to establish trust with citizens, they should enthusiastically agree to this kind of reporting.

RE: LC 825

As stated in my comments on LC 746, police must be held accountable for their actions, whether through criminal proceedings or civil court.

Police officers in Oregon have had a history of abuse of power, especially in our marginalized communities and communities of color. Without enacting oversight and paths to accountability both personally and professionally, our communities will continue to suffer. I urge you to pass further legislation to ensure that the police serve every citizen of Oregon.

Thank you very much for your time,

Rebecca Helgeson