

Overall, my primary concern is in Qualified Immunity for law enforcement. Law enforcement & city policing, as a profession, has been around for 269 years, dating all the way back to 1751 in Philadelphia.

Over the course of this long period of time, law enforcement officers in the continental United States have continually demonstrated to be more aggressive, more violent, more insidious, and more duplicitous in practice, and in action against their fellow citizens, and especially against BIPOC communities.

These incidences of brutality & corruption are observationally axiomatic, indefensible, and irrefutable.

During the course of the last 269 years, law enforcement in the United States has become increasingly more militarized, and subsequently more violent, with virtually no reliable oversight to hold any officers accountable for the countless human & civil rights violations they have committed, including, but not limited to murder.

Even in the rare instances where officers are held accountable, disciplinary actions taken against those officers who violate human rights are essentially granted paid leave.

If we're being honest, that, in no way, shape, or form demonstrates any kind of genuine disciplinary action.

There's never any real consequence that actually affects the officer responsible for violating the rights of their fellow citizens.

In fact, any consequences doled out at all, that end in lawsuit, are paid out by the city, which is subsequently paid out by the taxpayers. In essence, accountability for law enforcement is virtually nonexistent.

Law enforcement officers have repeatedly demonstrated to act with impunity, thanks to qualified immunity, and they use their impunity to, quite literally, get away with murder.

The ludicrous protections afforded to law enforcement officers by qualified immunity is the exact reason why it's evidently impossible to ever realistically reform law enforcement in this country, in its current incarnation.

As long as qualified immunity exists for law enforcement, the systemic acts of violence committed by law enforcement will never cease.

There's no personal incentive for individual officers to reform their behavior. In fact, it goes even further than that; it's a culture problem within law enforcement. Many law enforcement officers are encouraged, and even trained by their own colleagues, and superiors to behave in the violent, entitled fashions that they've demonstrated over and over again. They know they can get away with literal murder, with virtually no consequences. And as such is observationally evident, they act upon that impunity, with callous indifference & entitlement to inflict harm upon their fellows citizens.

Law enforcement agencies across this country have had 269 years to get it right; to reform themselves, and behave in an exemplary fashion.

And although this committee hearing is not indicative of committee hearings of law enforcement across the United States, when it comes to Portland, Oregon (my native home), my concerns, informed opinions, and observations are more than relevant.

I believe qualified immunity should be stripped from every single law enforcement officer in Portland, Oregon, and Multnomah County as a whole.

Let law enforcement officers fund their own liability insurance. And then we'll see just how quickly they reform themselves.

Sincerely,

Your constituent & fellow citizen,

- Michael John