

To whom it may concern,

My name is Camilo Abreu. I am a resident of Portland, Oregon, an economics student at Portland State University, the Legislative Affairs Director of the Portland State University Student Government, and a member of the Oregon Students Association.

I would like to relate with you my testimony regarding House Bill 3338. From 2013-2019 hundreds if not thousands of community members have worked tirelessly to reject the premise of armed policing as an element of our education. Entire schools have released statements and research opposing the armament of our campus safety officers. Students and faculty have collected over 7,000 signatures, have participated in advisory committees, have conducted surveys, and demonstrated repeatedly to voice their opposition to this decision. Six years after this idea was first presented to us, our community's demands have been ignored, our worst fears have been realized, and the most tepid compromises promised to us by our university administration have been broken.

Our demands were to have unarmed campus safety officers, to have mental health and resource advocacy for students on campus. Our fears were that marginalized communities and peoples would be hurt. The compromises we received were to make recommendations to the implementation of armed police on PSU's campus.

Three years after implementation

no school shooters have been stopped.

two lives have been lost at the hands of our campus police.

We walk our campus to the daily sight of houseless people being dragged out in handcuffs, expelled from sleeping in public spaces when the weather is freezing, and subjected to civil rights violations.

None of our recommendations from the 2015 Implementation Advisory Committee have been successfully implemented.

Our sworn and armed officers have violated multiple laws related to staffing requirements, supervision, and protocol relating to investigations and officer-involved shootings.

These are a few of the effects we have witnessed on our campus following the decision to arm campus safety officers. In my role I have reviewed thousands of pages of documents,

interviewed countless members of our community, and engaged with hundreds of students regarding the armament of our campus police through tabling, speaking engagements, and meetings with student groups, faculty members, and unions. I have made myself familiar with every meeting and their respective minutes on this topic at PSU since 2013. I have reviewed the approximately 500 page manual provided to our Campus Safety Officers. In theory, and in practice, I believe there is an overwhelming amount of evidence to ask for your support in disarming our campus police.

In theory, significant evidence corroborates the conclusion that policing in the United States has had a disproportionate and violent impact on people from marginalized communities.

Black men aged 15–34 are between nine and 16 times more likely to be killed by police than other people

A quarter of those killed by police show signs of mental illnesses

Nearly one half of people experiencing houselessness are victims of violence

The houseless community comprises 3% of Portland’s population

One in every two arrests in Portland are of people experiencing houselessness

That proportion increases if we isolate Portland State University Police arrests

In theory, there are methods of public accountability for municipal law enforcement. City government, the mayor, and elected officials are ultimately held accountable if they fail to exercise the appropriate oversight of law enforcement. Sheriff’s in counties are electable officials. Many metropolitan areas are beginning to implement Civilian Oversight Committees that have subpoena power and can demand institutional changes in response to policing that is incongruent with their community’s needs. At Portland State University, there exists no mechanism for the administrators and executives of our law enforcement to be accountable to our university campus. A clear and demarcated majority of our community voiced opposition to armed policing. An unelected Board of Trustees and University President funded and implemented armed sworn officers under their jurisdiction. These administrators then took a laissez-faire approach towards executive oversight. They took money from tax-payers and students to fund a poorly-trained, poorly-supervised police force that had no accountability to its community. In response to our renewed demands in the wake of multiple killings, these unelected officials have spent \$300,000 for current and former campus law enforcement officers to write a report that our own educators have established draws conclusions with poor statistical modeling, violates multiple criteria for scientific rigor or academic integrity, and is honestly an affront to our community, the families those who have been killed at the hands of our police, and the values of our institution.

This report, known as the Margolis Healy Report, determined a few things over the course of 200 pages.

PSU Police are poorly supervised

PSU Police do not conduct or engage in the trainings requested by the implementation committee

PSU police primarily respond to events that do not require armed police

PSU Police do not have the background necessary to do the mental health and houseless outreach necessary for our campus

52% of respondents oppose PSU Police being armed

37% of respondents support PSU police being armed

Their conclusion? Give them another chance. We will not. Our trust has been violated. We have been misled, ignored, and lied to. Now our campuses want us to give them another chance to continue to threaten our safety, our mental health, and our wallets for an ill-supported initiative that has had violent consequences.

My life would be easier if I didn't provide this testimony. If I didn't spend countless hours with our community, with our students, with our faculty, demanding our voices to be heard.

I provide you this testimony and I engage in this work because our lives matter. Jason Washington's life matters. Richard Barry's life matters. Tomorrow I will continue to be a student. In a few months I may have a job. Jason Washington is still gone. Jason Washington's family is still here. Nothing we can do can bring him back. Is it really too demanding to reverse the policies and decisions that directly took a father away, a grandfather away, a husband, brother, veteran, and proud graduate away? We demanded our university do the right thing. They ignored us. Now we implore our elected officials to do what our unelected officials refuse to do. In the words of Jason's brother Andre Washington, "I'll be around until the guns are put down."