

Co-Chairs and members of the Committee:

My name is Monte Jarvis, Multnomah County resident.

I'm 53. I'm white and I'm racist. I've been in denial, silent and submissive to white privilege all my life. I have a lot of work to do everyday to be Anti-racist. It's uncomfortable, humiliating when I make mistakes. But losing a little bit of comfort and being humbled are tiny prices to pay.

Black Lives Matter to me today.

I see bills before you today that create a database of police discipline records, notifies the Attorney General for use of force, directs police officers to intervene to stop another officer from violating laws, prohibits law enforcement from using tear gas (and hopefully any derivative or isotope I might add), or from using long range acoustic devices or sound cannons, and "provides that a peace officer may not use force that limits ability of person to breathe..." Wait a second? Provides? "MAY NOT?" I just want to be clear. I smell loop holes.

While I'm supportive of these "first starts" at police accountability, the truth is that it's disgusting that we have spell these things out in 2020, especially those that have been war crimes for a century. Oh yeah, that's right... we, white people who either directly, indirectly or both allowed Black Lives to be used, violated, murdered and incarcerated at obviously racist rates. For years and decades and centuries. And it's continuing today across the U.S.

Let's not get pleased with ourselves by any of these words before you today. This barely scratches the surface of the racist policies that are twisted up in our halls of government and corridors of power.

Our words can't be trusted, only our actions can lead to trust. I also realize we can't dismantle racism in a week or two. It will take persistent effort. Everyday.

I see no words today that we're going to commit ourselves to removing racist policies. Let's face it, us white people used our privilege to hide racist policies in every corner of society and culture, its norms and laws, holidays and traditions.

We have so much work to do. Let's commit ourselves to be an anti-racist, so that going forward our work leads to abolishing racist policy after racist policy. Our privileges need to be redeemed.

Thank you again for allowing my voice to be heard when it was silent for so long, and when there are so many voices unheard and not represented.