

Thank you for taking my testimony. I was present at several protests throughout 2020 where law enforcement deployed any number of incredibly dangerous and harmful projectiles and agents. Besides the frequent bullrushes that caused numerous injuries to retreating protestors (often occurring while protestors' backs were facing law enforcement, following the order to disperse), I experienced the effects of tear gas, and it was clear that the use of these tools was indiscriminate. There was simply no way for (and no concern as to whether) these weapons to be used in any manner that could be describes as "de-escalatory." As a result of the violence I witnessed by law enforcement against local residents, I have experienced recurring emotional trauma that has affected my work and personal relationships, as well as my physical well-being. There is already much discussion surrounding the long-term negative effects of exposure to tear gas. During the period of most frequent protests this summer, I noticed a distinct change in my appetite, experienced weight loss, and headaches. In general, 2020 has shown us that law enforcement officers, if given access to these means, will most certainly deploy them in situations outside their intended use. These weapons intensify panic and chaos rather than ease tensions. They have the ability to cause permanent damage and even death. They increase the likelihood for expensive settlements due to police misconduct. Their availability will continue to erode public trust in law enforcement. Thank you again.