

A safe and civil society should not need a militarized police force. The war on drugs was the catalyst for the militarization of police and, as we have seen for many decades, this military equipment and tactics have been used to brutalize communities of color. There is no justification for police departments to have armored personnel carriers that are used by our military in actual warzones, not in the streets of our cities. The police have been transformed into an occupation force, and as we have seen, when police are told that they are the hammer of justice they begin to see their community members as nails that need to be hammered down regardless of any wrongdoing. When I see a fully kitted out beat cop on the street I do not feel safe, I feel intimidated and wonder if I've been transported to a street in Baghdad. I ask that the committee vote for HB 2481 and begin to demilitarize the police.