

Submitter: Ana Johns
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure: HB4008

I have had chemical weapons and "less lethals" used on my body simply for exercising my first amendment rights, and I vehemently oppose rolling back any protections that were put into place with HB 2928.

Police need increased measures of accountability, not fewer impediments to inflicting violence.

In the summer of 2020 we all saw first hand what it looks like when an unaccountable police force wrecklessly uses chemical weapons. Children were gassed in their homes, pets and wildlife were exposed, flora was impacted in addition to the thousands of demonstrators that suffered. The immediate and long-term impacts of exposure to these weapons on human bodies is understudied in the US because until very recently, there was no source of data. Like other bodies with a uterus, my menstrual cycle was immediately and for months afterward impacted by exposure. I still have no medical explanation for why that occurred and how it may impact my health in the future.

Less lethal munitions are only classified as such when used correctly, and even within those parameters are still incredibly dangerous. Scores of officers indiscriminately shot munitions into crowds at angles far higher than their training instructed. Numerous demonstrators were hit in the head, face, chest and torso. No one should have been shot.

Any action taken to roll back restrictions on the use of these types of weapons will only put the community in further danger.

I urge you to vote to ensure the greatest degree of accountability for officers' use of these weapons, and that can only come from restricting them.

Thank you for your time.