

Submitter: Alacia Lauer
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure: HB4131

I am a resident and homeowner in Southeast Portland, I was born in Portland and raised here by a now retired Portland Police Officer. A lot of times when I say I'm the daughter of a police officer, people assume my father is the police officer. But it's important to me to mention that my mom is the police officer and in fact, she was a police officer in North and Northeast Portland when she was pregnant with me.

As an adult and professional, I've worked in the Portland mayor's office and more recently in the New York City mayor's office of criminal justice. I've coordinated public relations efforts with the PPB and with NYPD and other agencies. I've experienced large crowd control situations firsthand, specifically in New York City around justice issues as well as in Portland during the Occupy demonstrations.

I have been in rooms where options have been discussed and I have on occasion seen how innovative techniques and environmental design can effectively keep everyone safe.

It is barbaric to even consider continuing the use of chemical weapons against citizens.

According to U.S. House lawmakers in a memo released just this past October 2021, the federal government does not regulate the safety of tear gas and has not conducted an epidemiological study of its health effects despite its widespread use by law enforcement agencies. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/congress/u-s-government-has-not-weighed-safety-tear-gas-despite-n1281508>

As reported by NBC News national, one of our own Portlanders who happens to be Afro Indigenous, suffered a miscarriage that she and many health professionals believe attribute to tear gas exposure. Also as reported by national news, several families, including small children and people with disabilities, were exposed to tear gas in their own homes - without having anything to do with the activities on the street and with nowhere to escape their harmful effects.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBs_C4JrIIE

Why are we still here debating this?

I think if you support the use of tear gas and chemical weapons on your own citizens, it's because you don't want us to heal. It's because you want to keep us in trauma. It's because you are not only okay with the inequality that exists today, but you want

it to continue.

We don't need to be afraid. We already have the tools to do better. We just need to commit to doing it.

I'm asking you to please commit today to doing better: say NO to HB 4131.