

Submitter: Lewis Fitzgerald Holland

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Rules

Measure: HB4131

The Portland Police bureau has waged a systemic campaign against the first amendment rights of protestors for years. They have targeted those fighting against a racist and violent police force, and brutalized them with chemical weapons that would amount to war crimes on a battlefield. Countless friends and I have experienced the traumatizing affects of teargas and crowd dispersal chemicals, simply for daring to stand up to a system that threatens the lives of BIPOC Portlanders every day, and upholds a violent and classist status quo.

Teargas and other crowd dispersal chemicals do not have transient and short lived effects - they caused stomach, breathing and reproductive system issues in all of us for months on end, after multiple exposures in the course of constitutionally protected activity. The Portland police bureau lives above and beyond the law. They let vigilantes roam our streets, and murder us in cold blood and call the killers "homeowners." They shield Nazis and give them pay raises. They shred our constitution and they emboldened the insurrectionists who invaded Washington on January 6th. The rise of fascist, alt-right authoritarianism in this country is deeply tied to the Portland Police Bureau, and we cannot afford to let them terrorize us with free reign. Our mayor is inept and complicit, our city council is lost in a haze. This body took the important step to roll back their use of chemicals that are banned on the battlefield. Please, as citizens of Portland in this moment of crisis, we are begging you, do not give them more tools to traumatize and maim us.