

February 6, 2020

Honorable Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

As a retired peace officer and victim advocate, I support HB 4126, relating to the concealment of a person's face during criminal activity.

The domestic terrorist group known as antifa is wreaking havoc on the streets of Portland, Eugene, and other Oregon cities. More often than not they go unprosecuted because they cover their faces and cannot be identified. Antifa's motto is "Who's streets, our streets!" and their army of masked criminals enforce that motto by intimidation and threats of bodily harm.. These are CRIMINAL actions committed by cowards who hide their faces to avoid prosecution. With no fear of consequences, they are free to commit a variety of atrocities on innocent citizens. While antifa is the most obvious example, anyone who conceals their identity to commit crimes should be held accountable.

There have been NUMEROUS incidents of law-abiding (even elderly) citizens being knocked down or assaulted by masked rioters in our state. Last year a journalist and an innocent bystander were hospitalized with severe injuries after being beaten with pipes, and the perpetrators walked free because they couldn't be identified. A man walking with his children was attacked and beaten in downtown Portland for simply wearing a red hat! The previous year an elderly motorist was dragged out of his car by rioters blocking the street. In 2018, a defenseless woman in a wheelchair was surrounded and threatened. Local businesses have reported losses in the thousands due to vandalism by rioters. The list goes on & on, and it must STOP.

We all enjoy the 1st Amendment right to freely speak and assemble. But when people conceal their identities to vandalize, assault & terrorize, they have crossed the line into criminal behavior. Law-abiding citizens of ALL political persuasions have the right to walk down a public street or go about their daily business without fear of being attacked by thugs in masks!!

Legislators, please PROTECT INNOCENT CITIZENS against masked rioters and pass HB 4126!!

Lesley Roehr
Retired Deputy Probation Officer
Wilsonville, Oregon

