

Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of HB 2928 for the regulation of use of chemical incapacitants, kinetic impact projectiles and sound devices by law enforcement agencies. I am a youth organizer with Sunrise PDX, an organization dedicated to climate justice. These chemicals have already wrecked havoc on too many bodies and we have not even seen the worst of the long term effects.

It is disheartening to see public comments from parents and educators at The Cottonwood School should not have to worry about children breathing in toxic chemicals at recess. We have no clue what the environmental legacy of these chemical agents may be, and if they continue to be utilized and continue to seep into the bodies and the soils of our community, we will have a future of hazardous lands and possibly an increased number of Superfund sites.

We have seen the complexity, the financial drain, and the consequences involved in Superfund sites in this very city. The Portland Harbor, made up of land and water that was sustainably cared for by the Nez Perce for thousands of years, was reduced to a threat to human life and the environment by the EPA and designated as a Superfund site in 2000 because of the mass amounts of chemicals and pollutants introduced beginning in the 1850s when the land was stolen. As we know, these types of sites end up being more about lawyers and administrative costs than about repair and reparations.

Therefore, we need this type of legislation in place to ban the use of these chemical incapacitants before its too late. Based on my own experiences this summer and innumerable accounts from others, law enforcement has been severely reckless in the use of chemical incapacitants, kinetic impact projectiles and sound devices. I do believe that this legislation is a starting point, because as long as we have language that encourages immunity in any capacity, these agencies have proved that they will find a way to negate the law and use these harmful substances without accountability.

Thank you Representative Bynum and Representative Pham for being sponsors on this bill, and for the work that you do to make our communities safer and healthier.