

Submitter: Sandy Chung
On Behalf Of: Community Member 21
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure: HB4131

Community member 21, Portland: My most vivid and violent memory of teargas was seeing an elderly man, who came out to protest police violence, trapped in a cloud of gas. He was blinded and suffocated by the burning sensation you feel, like hot sauce being forced into your eyes, nose and lungs, while being disoriented from the sounds of the chaos around him. He was lost, and for him, any direction could have been further away or deeper into the cloud that was causing him so much pain. The crowd, mostly young, able bodied folks, was still retreating so they didnt have to experience the same thing. I must have been the first to see him, because despite not having protection from the gas myself I was the first who went in to help. By the time I got to him I was feeling the same as he was, but at least I knew where I'd just come from. A medic with protection had spotted us not long after I started guiding us back to the crowd, and came to redirect us perpendicular to where the wind was blowing. When we were out both of us had incredible difficulty breathing, and given water bottles to flush out eyes with, and wet cloth to breathe through, as tear gas binds to water. That elderly man may have died that day if nobody had seen him.