

Submitter: Alexis McCain
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB4131

My name is Alexis McCain, age 27. In July of 2020 I attended a protest at the justice center against police brutality. This protest remained peaceful. As soon as Mayor Ted Wheeler finished giving his speech, it only took moments for PPB to inappropriately shoot munitions and tear gas into a peaceful crowd. Children, dogs, and pregnant women were among members of the crowd. For 4 weeks after I was gassed, I experienced extreme uterine pain and bleeding from my vagina as well as weakened lung capacity.

Please read my statement from July 20th 2020: "On Saturday night, police in Portland charged in unexpectedly and immediately shot tear gas canisters at our group of protestors. No riot or civil disturbance was declared. We were not warned or asked to leave. The group included medical Dr.s, war veterans, teenagers, children, elders and a litteral wall of mummies. They shot a tear gas canister directly at the group of mothers in yellow, one of which was clearly pregnant.

Non-violent protestors are being grabbed off the street by unidentified individuals in military gear and put in unmarked rental cars with no reasonable cause or explanation and being held in undisclosed locations. With white supremacist presence in Portland, there is no way to tell if citizens are being detained by a legal entity or a white supremacist group.

The police and feds have done nothing to stop the white supremacists from standing on the streets threatening us with assault rifles and gallon buckets full of ammunition. My friend and I personally were targeted by a white lifted pickup truck that aimed and attempted to hit us while we walked back to our cars after a march. These same trucks are still terrorizing Portlanders nightly because the police want them here."

The use of teargas is unethical. It is considered a war crime because it is extremely dangerous. It is documented that tear gas causes permanent repudiation damage to victims and can cause women to become infertile. After the bleeding that I and other female protestors experienced as a result of getting tear gassed, I now have to live with the worry that I may never be able to have children as a result. It is a deterrent from attending future peaceful protests and exercising my right to freedom to demonstrate.

Rubber bullets and other munitions were never intended to be aimed at people or to be used in close range. They are specifically designed to be shot at the ground. Even with proper use, these munitions can be lethal, but with improper close range and

aimed use that PPB uses, they are especially dangerous. They can break bones, cause concussions, and death. The night that I was gassed in July of 2020, PPB shot many munitions directly into the crowd at peaceful protestors indiscriminately and carelessly. A friend of mine in August of 2020 was shot at close range with rubber bullets several times. Even after she was laying on the ground motionless, police continued to shoot her until her leg cracked in two places.

PPB is not using tear gas and munitions for crowd control. They are using it for suppression of peaceful protests, specifically protests regarding police brutality and police budgets. And because tear gas and munitions are so dangerous, the suppression is working to deter people from exercising their rights. Even proper use of tear gas and munitions for crowd control is unethical, dangerous, and cruel and should not be used in Portland.