

Submitter: John McDonnell  
Committee: House Committee on Judiciary  
Measure: HB 2572  
6 February, 2023

Dear Representative Kropf and members of the committee,

House Bill 2572 addresses only paramilitary groups and not other groups causing damage to property or personal injury. Just a few years ago in downtown Portland, there were groups with firebombs, large fireworks, and weapons, destroying businesses, and at one point, attacking the federal courthouse. The people performing those acts would not fall under this bill unless they were deemed to be “unauthorized paramilitary groups”. It appears that when mostly peaceful protests turn into civil disorder and rioting, there would be no punishment under this bill.

The definition of “unauthorized paramilitary group” is vague and could easily be interpreted to mean a church security group or most any security company. It could also be applied to most anyone if there is a simple perception by an outside observer that they are a paramilitary group. It lends itself to abuse and false accusations.

Since the HB2572 fails to address the groups that have in fact incited riots in Portland and other cities, and have used huge quantities of commercial grade fireworks as weapons, it should not move forward unless those groups are included and can be held responsible for damages.

Respectfully,  
John McDonnell  
Salem, Oregon