

**JANEEN SOLLMAN**  
**STATE REPRESENTATIVE**  
DISTRICT 30



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

June 26, 2020

Timothy G. Sekerak  
Chief Clerk of the House  
Oregon House of Representatives  
State Capitol Building  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Vote Explanation for House Bill 4208

Dear Chief Clerk Sekerak,

I voted to support HB 4208, but I did so with reservation because my concern is that it does not go far enough to protect our citizens. I do agree that it is a move in the right direction though to provide strict guidelines and standards for use. Tear gas is a chemical irritant that causes irritation of the mucous membranes in the eyes inducing tearing, eye twitching, and skin irritation. It can cause difficulty swallowing as well as chest tightness, coughing, shortness of breath and a feeling of choking. It can trigger violent asthma attacks in those that have asthma and chronic bronchitis for those who are repeatedly exposed. The effects of tear gas are instantaneous and most often, will be short term, if you have received a small level in an open space. However, at high levels in closed spaces, tear gas can be fatal.

Tear gas is a chemical weapon that is banned for use in warfare under the Geneva Convention. A chemical weapon that is not allowed in war should not be used in any circumstance, especially not used against Oregonians. While I support this bill, I feel that it needs to go further, and that House Bill 4208 should be an impetus for us to find alternate means of dispersing crowds during a riot. Banning something outright can be problematic because you are giving no direction as to what to replace it with. However, we need to investigate other methods of crowd control that do not have lethal or serious, permanent health implications. I am hopeful that the Joint Committee on Transparent Policing and Use of Force Reform will continue to work towards removing its use from Oregon in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Janeen Sollman". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Representative Janeen Sollman