



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release
July 21, 2020

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Rep. Karin Power and Rep. Janelle Bynum Statement on Civil Rights Lawsuit Filed Against Federal Law Enforcement

PORTLAND – Rep. Karin Power (D-Milwaukie) and Rep. Janelle Bynum (D-Happy Valley) have joined as plaintiffs with the Western States Center, the First Unitarian Church of Portland, and an American Civil Liberties Union legal observer in a lawsuit filed in federal court on Tuesday alleging that the federal government has violated the 10th Amendment rights of protesters.

Rep. Karin Power said in a statement:

“The right to peacefully assemble is one of the core foundations of our democracy,” said Rep. Power. “I have been inspired by the people of Oregon's response to the death of George Floyd. Protests in solidarity with Black Lives Matter have sprung up in every corner of our state, from small towns in Eastern Oregon to downtown Portland. .

“For those of us who have supported and attended the youth-led protests in Portland, the idea that the city is “under siege” is laughable. The physical injuries sustained by peaceful protesters at the hands of federal law enforcement agencies, however, are not. In a democratic America, citizens should not have to fear that unidentified federal officers will seize them into unmarked vehicles or beat peaceful protesters until bones are broken. These unconstitutional actions must be stopped, and have no place in our great state of Oregon.”

Rep. Janelle Bynum said in a statement:

“These acts of violence perpetrated by federal law enforcement are designed to pass down a legacy of fear and further the interminable control of the movements of Black and Brown bodies since the days of American slavery,” said Rep. Bynum. “I will not let my children, or any of our children, inherit paranoia and mistrust of the people we commission to protect us. I am showing them the way of non-violent protest against oppression and government overreach. I am teaching them the true meaning of good trouble, necessary trouble. This lawsuit is just one step on the path toward reforming the broken institutions that allow violence to be perpetrated against communities of color.

“This is a good opportunity to remind us that the ultimate act of protest and protection is voting. Through our votes we each can protect our constitutional rights and liberties by influencing not just the executive and legislative branches of government but also the judicial. This pursuit of a better United States, Oregon and neighborhoods demands us voting at each and every opportunity.”

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