

I have a real problem with HB 22. This bill should not criminalize "diverting a law enforcement officer's attention." This is plainly autocratic, a slippery slope towards authoritarianism.

Our police should provide community service, not antagonize the community, making themselves judge and jury of individual or group interactions.

Throughout the country, we have seen witnessed the fatal effects of allowing our armed police to exert too much power over citizens, citizens who may be protesting, as is their constitutional right, or who may be having a mental health crises.

Too often, our police, armed to the teeth with guns and tear gas, have exerted violence against those they deem trouble. This while they themselves are protected by tax-funded body armor, helmets and shields.

Too often, our police have antagonized, assaulted or even killed rather than de-escalate a situation...particularly among Black and minority citizens. The tragic irony is that oftentimes Caucasian perpetrators of violence, themselves who have used automatic weapons of war, have been arrested without incident.

Please amend the bill to restore democracy to every citizen. We should all be equal in the eyes of the law, with our constitutional rights protected, and with the expectation that our police are present to restore order. They should act in service to our citizens and our communities.

Thank you for your consideration of my point of view.

Sincerely,

Ann Cotter