

To Chairman LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide opponent testimony against House Bill 22.

On Tuesday, April 20, 2021, an historic guilty verdict was announced against former veteran police officer, Derrick Chauvin. Mr. Chauvin felt no responsibility to protect the life and health of George Floyd, the man he had in his custody on May 25, 2020. He produced a fraudulent police report about what happened to Mr. Floyd. The reason he was convicted of the murder and manslaughter charges against him was because a 17 year old had the courage to film what he and his accomplices did to Mr. Floyd. Without the civilian recording of what happened to Mr Floyd, even Minneapolis Chief of Police, Medaria Arradondo, would not have known the truth. The Chief subsequently testified at Mr. Chauvin's trial and praised the 17 year old for her actions to record what happened. If HB 22 was the law in Minnesota she and the onlookers who pled for the life of George Floyd could have been arrested arbitrarily as harassing and obstructing the police. HB 22 gives the determination of what is harassment and what is obstruction solely to the police. Such vague and arbitrary laws are characteristic of authoritarian regimes where citizens are imprisoned for flimsy reasons out of revenge or as a terror tactic.

HB 22 is an unnecessary law. There are laws against interfering with an arrest, obstruction of official business, and attacking police. HB 22 serves those who want to limit justice, give power to the bad apples in police departments, and erode our Bill of Rights. The fact that the Chief of Police and other police testified against Derrick Chauvin shows that the police do not want bad apples in the force but want them found and removed. Policing is challenging, dangerous, and important work. It is made harder when those who are not ethical stand beside those who take their responsibilities to heart. There are many ways to support the police in carrying out their vital role in our society. HB 22 is not one of them. Please do not vote to release HB 22 out of this committee.

Anne Caruso