

Thank you for taking the time to read my written testimony and pardon me if there are any grammatical errors or misspellings as I am having to write this at 11pm because I was only informed of the need at 11:30am. With that being the case and the extensive day that was already planned I am writing this in a rushed fashion as the life of an activist is never dull and there is so much more work to be done tomorrow. I mention the lack of time for preparation because this is normalcy of "our" government. To hold public hearings in places we cannot readily access and at times of the day when we are required to be within our paid employment. Creating legislation that we don't always readily understand and passing it off as "what is best for the people". With that being said, we demand you to do better.

Now on to the issue at hand, I am sure you are awaiting the facts and pleas asking to stop these bills, why they are bad, and why they do harm to ALL marginalized communities but that is not this. You are all somewhat vaguely aware and albeit willful ignorance or ignorance from the lack of understanding you proceed anyway. All of you voting for these anti-protest bills know the significant harm this does to the First Amendment Rights of marginalized communities. You are all aware of the danger it puts people of color in as it relates to the police, the bias that the LGBTQ or poor communities will face, and the stigmas and hardships that will come with being labeled a felon, yet you do this anyway. If the crowd had been able to distract Derrick Chauvin maybe George Floyd would still be here, and to think that you claim these bills are in direct response to the protests, WHERE IS THE POLICE REFORM? This is just a scare tactic to stop us from making change. But we will not, and we will continue the fight for equity and equality. We are learning just as you are, we are finding better solutions outside of just our demonstrations, we are building coalitions with the intentions to impact these systems of oppression from all angles.

You suggest these bills are seeking to protect officers, but I would argue they are seeking to silence these voices you are hearing of the people you deem to be voiceless. These bills are nothing less than another form of bigotry, racism, and bias for it is not the majority that has had to march, protest, and demand their rights for the last hundreds of years. No, it has been black people, and women, and the LGBTQ family, and immigrants, and Asian Americans, and veterans, and handicapped person, and those demanding freedom from religious persecution. Adding to the charges of obstruction of justice and allowing for officers to be annoyed as a cause for arrest shows just how much Black Lives Do Not Matter to you.

I will end with saying this, many of you writing these bills that impact these communities have no experience with the people, have not read the real history of this country, and make decisions to further your political careers or your party's position. It is evident when you hear a lawmaker say, "we are a civilized society, and we don't seek to change through violence". Remember this colonizer built this country off the backs of slaves that the brutally beat into submission, while stealing the land of the native people and deeming them savages. This country put Asian-Americans in concentration camps when they were at war and speaking of war, what was the reason we were in Iraq again was it oil or what?