

Chair LeRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland and members of the Criminal Justice Committee:

I am Clarissa Epps, a staff member of the BREAD Organization. BREAD is a coalition of congregations that pushes for solutions to serious community problems. I write in opposition to HB 22.

HB 22 is unnecessary and violates the right of the community to have our voices heard in the public arena.

It is outrageous to think that our state would make it a criminal offense to shout at an officer when someone sees something that appears to be unreasonable use of force or an unjust action. This would continue to diminish the community's trust and relationship with law enforcement... a relationship that has already been broken time and time again.

The people in our congregation's come from faith traditions and moral backgrounds that call them to demand justice and this bill would limit the ways in which they could live out their core values. I urge you not to go through with this.