Statement by Mayor Wheeler: "I stand in solidarity with our non-violent demonstrators."

Press Release

Published: June 6, 2020 2:53 pm

Contact

Tim Becker
Public Information Officer

timothy.becker@portlandoregon.g

503-823-6784

Members of the media,

Please see a statement from Mayor Wheeler below.

I stand in solidarity with our non-violent demonstrators, who are sending a strong message that we are long overdue for meaningful reform and restorative justice.

Our community has serious concerns about the use of CS gas for crowd management, particularly during a time when we're battling a pandemic. I share those concerns. Today, I directed Portland Police Chief Jami Resch that gas should not be used unless there is a serious and immediate threat to life safety, and there is no other viable alternative for dispersal. I strongly believe that gas should not be used to disperse crowds of non-violent protestors or for general crowd management purposes. It should only be used in response to violence that threatens life safety. My priority and focus are to protect the lives of demonstrators, our first responders, and the people in custody at the Justice Center.

I am confident that the Portland Police officers, Multnomah County Sheriff deputies, and Oregon State Police troopers on the ground will continue to acknowledge the voice of protesters and act in a way that reflects the professionalism that is expected and is a core value of our police force, as well as the law enforcement agencies supporting them. Night after night, they are doing what they can to prioritize and protect the public's safety.

My colleagues and I are acutely aware of the urgency around these issues, and will continue to work together in the coming days to put together a package of actions that address the demands we are hearing loudly from our community.

###