

Statement from Levi Merrithew Horst and the Oregon Justice Resource Center re the filing of a complaint against the City Of Portland on behalf of three counter-protestors

October 7, 2019

“Our clients were attacked without provocation by officers of the Portland Police Bureau while our clients were gathered with others in the streets of Portland on August 4th last year to make a public expression of their opposition to fascism. Police used unlawful and excessive force against our clients, who followed police orders and did not engage in threatening or violent behavior. Police hit James Mattox and Aaron Cantu with rubber bullets and aerial munitions; and struck Tracy Molina and tackled her to the ground. This police violence caused physical injuries and psychological harm to our clients.

Portland Police have played into the hands of right-wing extremist groups such as Patriot Prayer by using harsh crowd control methods against anti-fascist counter-protestors. What’s more, the history of coordination between Portland Police and Joey Gibson of Patriot Prayer to organize PPB for security at Patriot Prayer’s event has been made public. Our clients joined the counter-fascist protest that day because they felt the type of hate speech Patriot Prayer expresses had no place in Portland and because they wanted to stand in solidarity with communities terrorized by Patriot Prayer. Portland Police chose to punish anti-fascist protestors as a group, while allowing right-wing groups to disobey police orders with impunity.

Responsibility for the harm our clients suffered lies not only with the officers involved, but also with those in the Portland Police chain of command who directed operations on August 4th last year. Our clients are seeking compensation for medical bills, lost wages, and other losses incurred as a direct result of the actions of Portland Police.”

ENDS

Media contacts:

- *Aaron Cantu is represented by the Oregon Justice Resource Center, (Juan Chavez jchavez@ojrc.info. Mr. Cantu is also represented by Brittney Plessner and Alex Meggit of OJRC.)*
- *James Mattox is represented by Levi Merrithew Horst, PC, (Viktoria Safarian viktoriamhlegal.com. Mr. Mattox is also represented by Jesse Merrithew of LMH.)*
- *Tracy Molina is represented by the Oregon Justice Resource Center (Juan Chavez jchavez@ojrc.info) and John Schlosser.*