



## PORTLAND COUPLE SEEK DAMAGES FROM CITY AFTER TEAR GAS EXPOSURE

Andy and Samira Green were caught in a cloud of tear gas released by Portland Police on June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PORTLAND, Ore. – A Portland couple including a pregnant woman who were exposed to tear gas released by Portland police at a protest last week have filed a lawsuit against the City of Portland. Andy and Samira Green are seeking up to \$200,000 in damages for the pain, anxiety, fear, and anguish they experienced at the hands of Portland Police.

Mr. and Mrs. Green and Mr. Green's two teenage children joined a demonstration downtown on June 2<sup>nd</sup> with peaceful intent to support the Black Lives Matter movement and protest the recent repression. As a Muslim family in America, they thought it important to be with their Black neighbors to oppose the violence they had witnessed on the news.

For the past week, officers of the Portland Police Bureau have used tear gas indiscriminately against people on the streets of Portland who are protesting for an end to police violence against Black people. Police have unleashed tear gas on crowds who have not committed any crimes and posed no threat to anyone else but were exercising their right to free speech.

Legal filings by the Oregon Justice Resource Center (OJRC) on behalf of the family describe what happened to the Greens on the evening of June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Shortly after 9 p.m., while heading west along SW Taylor intending to go back to their car, Mr. and Mrs. Green were caught in a cloud of tear gas released by Portland Police. Andy Green had a canister of gas whizz by his head and land a few feet away from him. Samira Green struggled to move quickly to escape the gas due to her pregnancy. She was overcome by coughing to the extent that the family was worried she might start having contractions. Mrs. Green had to sit down in the street and ultimately vomited. The couple were subsequently picked up in their car by a friend.

In a declaration, Andy Green told the court:

“There was no hint of provocation by either my family or any group I saw. I honestly just felt like we were embodying the spirit to assemble, petition the government and make our voices heard. This appeared to me to be a military-style maneuver to inflict as much punishment on the protesters as possible.”

“The dangerous nature of CS gas is well documented,” said attorney Juan Chavez, Director of the Civil Rights Project at the Oregon Justice Resource Center who is representing Mr. and Mrs. Green. “The City knew when it allowed police to use tear gas that it is by nature indiscriminate, tending to envelop everyone nearby in choking clouds of gas. Families demonstrating peacefully in the streets of Portland should never have to fear serious health impacts from police use of chemical weapons.”

ENDS/

Notes to Editors: The Oregon Justice Resource Center is also representing Nicholas Roberts, Michelle “Misha” Belden, and the nonprofit Don’t Shoot Portland in a separate class action lawsuit against the City of Portland seeking a temporary restraining order and a permanent injunction on the use of tear gas for crowd control by Portland Police. [Learn more.](#)