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For Immediate Release

Event: Friday rally and march measures progress in fight to preserve Bill of Rights, marks victory against local use of “protestor pens”.

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Date: Friday, July 30th, 2004

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: Pioneer Courthouse Square

“Friday rally and march measures progress in fight to preserve Bill of Rights, marks victory against local use of “protestor pens”.

The *Portland Peaceful Response Coalition*’s Friday rally for peace and justice returns to the local fight to preserve the Bill of Rights, reviewing a victory against the use of so-called “protestor pens” that have been a hallmark of the Democratic Convention in Boston this week. “Back in January the Portland Police Bureau had protestors bordered on three sides with eight-foot, barbed-wired-topped chain link fence out at the Embassy Suites Hotel,” said William Seaman, a volunteer with the PPRC. “At Cheney’s fundraiser last Monday it was the hotel that was enclosed by police barricades, not the protestors.”

Since January, many local civil rights and peace and justice organizations have engaged with the city and the police bureau, advocating concrete policies that protect the rights of protestors (copies of letters exchanged with the Mayor and Police Chief are posted at www.pprc-news.org). The latest letter was signed by over twenty local organizations, including the ACLU of Oregon, the National Lawyers Guild, the Northwest Constitutional Rights Center, Jobs with Justice, and the Portland Peaceful Response Coalition.

In spite of the progress apparent at Monday’s event, local organizers are still not satisfied with the policies of the police bureau for Cheney’s latest visit to Portland. “Among the areas that should have been available to the protestors was the broad sidewalk along the west side of the hotel property,” said Seaman. “If there had been a strike by employees of the hotel, that sidewalk is where you’d see a picket line, and that’s also where we should have seen protestors against Cheney’s long list of crimes.”

Police barricades ran along a perimeter approximately twenty meters south of the hotel parking lot entry road, across NE 82nd Avenue, and then north across NE Air Cargo Road. It was through this intersection that Republican donors arrived, and Cheney’s

motorcade sped away after the fundraiser. Protestors gathered along the southern and part of the western perimeter of the area cordoned off by the police.

“The legal observers and community organizers involved will be discussing what we saw last Monday and will be putting together a response,” said Seaman. “There’s a lot more work to do, but we should be encouraged by the contrast between Monday afternoon and what we faced back in January.” Seaman said that fare-checking by Portland Police on MAX trains, the deployment of ATVs and horses, uncertain access by persons with disabilities, and the display of “riot squad”-style weapons were among the features of Monday’s event that concern local organizers. “We encourage everybody who cares about the Bill of Rights to contact the City Council and the Police Bureau,” said Seaman. “The most effective way to protect our rights is by using them.”