

Hello Mr. Chair, Hello City Council, Hello Philadelphia.

My name is Brett Roman Williams, Chairman of the Board for the Anti-Violence Partnership of Philadelphia, Philadelphia native, and also a co-victim of gun violence. My father, first cousin, and childhood friend were all victims of homicide by a firearm. While growing up in Philadelphia, after experiencing the trauma of gun violence since the age of 5; I am here in the aftermath of my older brother, Derrick Williams, who was murdered almost 5 years ago on October 27, 2016. As the news headlines reported on that night, my brother was a 52 year old man, murdered execution style while coming home from the 76ers home opener. To be honest, the news article should've said murdered doors away from his home. I was with him at that game until we departed and went our separate ways. I remember receiving the calls around

midnight. However, once I received the news, I rushed over and my life changed forever. I saw the cars lined up on our street in West Oak Lane. I saw the yellow tape. I saw the police. I saw the news reporter. I saw the Dunkin Donuts cup that he was carrying and eventually was left at the scene of the crime. I saw my brothers blood on the street. I took pictures. I have the memories. I saw articles of my brothers clothing on the crime scene. He was wearing a downvest with feathers. I vividly remember seeing the white feathers from the vest floating in the blood, the following morning. I even picked up some the remains to handover to the homicide detectives when they came back to investigate for witnesses. My family was also given my brothers clothes in a paper bag once the detectives were through with the evidence. I was insulted and disgusted by the sheer negligence. Even retrieving evidence such as phone records, ballistics, autopsy

reports, and neighborhood hearsay, my brother's case remains unsolved.

My family has two residences on our West Oak Lane street where my brother was murdered. One literally across the street from the crime scene and as I just mentioned one, two doors away from our families home where our mother lives. Everyday we go outside, we see that crime scene.

Now, I know the specifics of this hearing focuses on crime scene clean up within the homes or inside places due to Victims Compensation eligibility. But as mentioned in this hearing, many cases are on the street and not in the homes. I'll never forget seeing my neighbor spraying and scrubbing my brother's blood off of the sidewalk. No one from the City called or attempted to clean the scene. My neighbor had to experience this. On top of the trauma that my family

experienced, it makes it difficult for me to properly communicate with my neighbor due to my recollection of him cleaning my brother's blood. In the subconscious of my mind, I feel obligated to his peace.

Now, I'd like to be clear about how I found out about Victims Compensation because many Philadelphia residents aren't aware of Victim's Compensation or the services that's available to victims and co-victims to receive the eligible reimbursements. Had I not been the closest of my brother's kin to identify him at the Medical Examiner's Office, I would not have been privy to any of this information. I consider myself lucky to be in this position and to have the capacity to testify today.

Since I've been made aware and been entrenched in this work as being an advocate of co-victims rights, I frequently ask my fellow Philadelphia residents do they know of

this information. Many, if not most say no. This must change. With the levels of violence and crime scenes in Philadelphia, this should be highly publized, distributed, and made very visible. There needs to be a comprehensive, and trauma informed system and process that is easily accessible and should be a standard. We need a solution to this issue. The people of Philaelphia should not be obligated to seek this information. The burden should not be on the people of Philadelphia to clean up the remains of any crime scene. The people of Philadelphia should not have blood on our hands. Thank you Councilman Jones, thank you City Council and thank you to my esteemed colleagues of the Anti-Violence Partnership of Philadelphia for this Resolution and Report.

