

March 24, 2021

From:

Rukiye Z. Abdul-Mutakallim
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To:

The House Criminal Justice Committee Testimony in opposition of House Bill 99

Chair LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to House Bill 99.

My name is Rukiye Zathra Abul-Mutakallim. And I am the proud mother of Suliman Ahmed Abdul-Mutakallim. He "is" a Navy Man of the United States of America (I refuse to refer to my son in the past tense. His spirit is still among us). My son, chose to follow in the footsteps of a long line of military men and women in our family's history to service their family, their neighbors, their community, and their Nation. He chose to service as an "enlisted" Navy Personnel, when he could have been a Navy Officer (his brother is a Commander in the Navy) --"AR". However, he wanted to be among those less favored than himself to show them that even when you have "challenges" in your life, you can and must always be kind, lend a helping hand, be understanding, pray and hope for the best, and use kind words towards each other, even when others don't do the same. He was raised with an Islamic understanding on how you live your life on this earth.

On a Sunday night, June 28th, 2015 between the hours of 8-pm & 10-pm, my son walked to an ATM near his home. He got \$60 dollars from the bank machine. He then walked to a near-by Take-Out Restaurant to buy dinner for himself and his family. He was returning from the restaurant, walking under a poorly lit overpass, when he was attacked. The amount of money that they took off his dying body was \$40 dollars. They also took his wallet, his cell phone, and the food he was bringing home for his family to enjoy.

Three assailants walked up behind him, shot him in the nape-of-the-neck. They did not even say, "stick'em-up" or "give me all your money", nor did they face him. They just shot him in the back of his head, he fell into the gutter, then they robbed him"! ---- My son was not born in the gutter, nor was he raised in a gutter like condition, and I thank The Lord of us all, that he did not die in the gutter!

The assailants were, a 14-year-old, a 16-year-old and a 25-year-old adult that led the boys to committing such a heinous crime. What made it so heinous in my mind was how they committed this horrible act --- they shot him from the back, and as my son laid there dying, then they robbed him and just walked away. They did not run, nor looked back. And to add to this merciless act, they did not even call 911 knowing that he was still alive, and they had my son's cell phone!

When we (his family) arrived at the hospital, my son was in the ICU. The upper part of his head was completely wrapped all the way around. You could see his face, but the swelling was so bad that his eyes were swollen shut. His coloration was dark from the blood that had built up from the gunshot.

As I sat by my baby's side and as his hourglass was trickling down, I felt the need to tell him about his birth. I said, Suliman you were born on a Tuesday, December 15, 1975, at 1:32 pm. You were 8lbs, 5oz, 21 inches long. I carried you for 10 months, because you were not in a hurry to leave the warmth and safety of my womb. My labor with you was 1 hour only and you were born in silence as is the Islamic way. And the first word you heard (pronounced in your right-ear) was The Creator's name Allah, and the next words were (pronounced in your left-ear) your name, Suliman Ahmed Abdul-Mutakallim.

I did not fight back the tears. I allowed them to fall as I kissed his hand and told him how much I loved him. That I was so honored to have him as a son.

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As I looked upon his glowing face, I saw a tear run down the corner of his right eye. A single tear. And then his hands began to turn cold. I knew then, at that very moment, my baby boy was gone. His spirit and soul had left his body.

I then said, "From 'The Almighty' you came and unto 'The Almighty' you have returned, as will happen to all who are born. Lord, please forgive us for any of our shortcomings while we were on this earth of Yours and grant us Your Mercy" --- Amin!

Then I let go of my son physically, but his Spirit shall always be with me in memory.

When the day came to face at least two of the assailants, to my surprise, they were babies, not men, but babies! One of the many questions that arose in my heart was, "how did children get a gun in their hands!

So, I lifted-up the curtain and looked underneath, then I found the answers, and so much more. As my heart filled with more tears from knowing the truth, my spirit, soul, and heart soften; but at the same time, it strengthened my understanding that our communities have an infection, a disease, if you so will, called trauma. It is coming after our babies.

Trauma is the real enemy that is causing the crimes that has risen to pandemic levels across our nation. Hurting people are hurting other people. To eradicate this disease, we must take steps that combat trauma by way of effective guns laws, education, training, awareness, and community base trauma centers. These are antibiotic and probiotic methods that can bring an end to the pandemic of gun violence, an any other methods of violence that are plaguing our Nation today. In taking these effective steps we will bring the light of hope to the future of mankind, which are ALL our babies.

I end this testimony, reminding this honorable Committee that "we the people" elected you, because we considered you as "men and women of understanding that pay heed". It is your responsibility as the leaders of our neighborhoods, our communities, our cities, and our Nation to establish laws that ensure that not another mother, not another father, nor guardian cry the tears that my heart cries every moment of every second, unless there is no choose. **By passing better "Gun Laws" we shall always have a choose. Saving the future of mankind is incumbent on us ALL**

My deepest sincerest request of this legislative body is that you oppose and not pass HB-99 without the slightest hesitation, nor reservation. Let us show ALL the children how to reach for the universal so they can catch a star. Then they will stop reaching down and picking up weapons (of all types) to hurt themselves and or others!

I appreciate the time you granted me in reading this letter. You are also welcomed to view the following 2 ½ minute video surrounding my son's death:

[\(36\) Mom Comes Face-To-Face With Her Son's Killer In Court | Humankind - YouTube](#)