

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 1, 2014

The Honorable Eric Holder
Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Holder,

We write today regarding the death of Danroy “DJ” Henry Jr., who was fatally shot by a Pleasantville, New York police officer on October 17, 2010. At the time, DJ was a 20-year-old junior at Pace University. His parents are residents of Easton, Massachusetts. The Henry family and their attorneys believe that the circumstances surrounding their son’s death merit further scrutiny. After hearing their accounting of the facts surrounding DJ’s death, we urge your office to consider a comprehensive review.

According to the Henry family, public deposition testimony from related civil litigation, news reports, and video surveillance all highlight troubling details about the evening’s events. These details include: (1) DJ was shot multiple times through his windshield by Officer Aaron Hess of the Mount Pleasant Police Department;¹ (2) after he was shot, DJ was taken out of the car and handcuffed;² (3) a second Mount Pleasant police officer present at the scene – Officer Ronald Beckley – contradicted Officer Hess’s statement that DJ instigated the confrontation and said he believed Hess to be the initial “aggressor”;³ and (4) in the aftermath of DJ’s death, Officer Beckley and Mount Pleasant Police Department Chief Louis Algano offered potentially conflicting statements regarding the circumstances of the altercation between DJ and Hess.⁴

We recognize the extraordinary burden our society places on the shoulders of police officers in the line of duty. In this case, however, a young man’s life ended far too soon, and we believe the full circumstances surrounding this incident merit further examination. DJ’s parents remain patient and steadfast in their efforts to investigate the circumstances surrounding this tragic shooting, and we appreciate your attention to this important matter.

¹ Deposition of Aaron Hess, August 14, 2012, at 165.

² Case Supplemental Narrative Report of Ronald Gagnon, October 20, 2010, at 1.

³ Deposition of Ronald Beckley, September 25, 2012, at 28-29.

⁴ Compare Deposition of Louis Algano, December 6, 2012, at 82-94 (noting that Algano’s initial statement referenced “another ... officer who also fired at the vehicle”), with Deposition of Ronald Beckley, at 28-29 (stating that he was “shooting at a person I thought was the aggressor and was inflicting deadly force on another” who is subsequently identified as Mr. Hess).

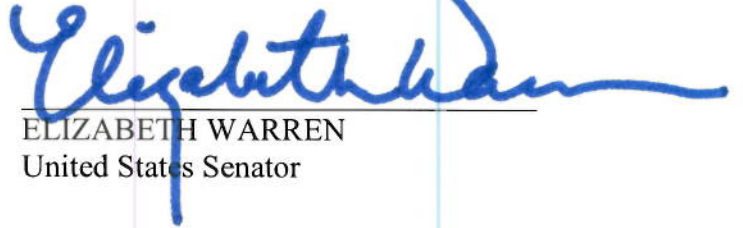
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/s/

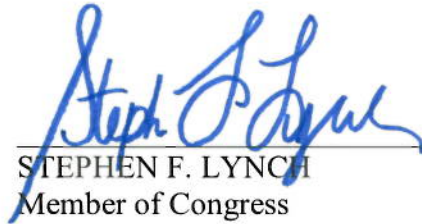
cc: Preet Bharara, United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York



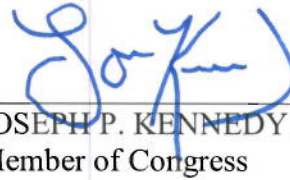
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United States Senator



ELIZABETH WARREN
United States Senator



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Member of Congress



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