

Hello,

First, I want to thank Representative Alcala for allowing me to give testimony today to support SB 360/ HB 2571, and everyone in this room for listening to what my family and I have gone through. My name is Heather Joyce, I am Dominique White's sister in-law. On September 28th, 2017, my family's lives were changed forever. It started out as a normal day, for me it was a morning of education at work; the class was covering basic dysrhythmias. While studying the fatal heart rhythms we were discussing PEA, or pulseless electrical activity. This occurs when the heart still has electrical conductivity, but no blood to circulate to the body. Never would I have thought that this would be my brother in law's fate that same morning.

Around 9:00 am Dominique was approached by two police officers in Ripley Park. The outcome of that encounter was the death of my brother in law by the hands of two police officers. After the incident we weren't given any details about what happened or what transpired that lead to his death. We were denied access to the police body cams; District Attorney, Michael Kagay told us that it was state law that prevented our family from viewing the video. Without knowing ourselves what happened, what were we supposed to tell Dominique's four sons when they asked why their father died. How does our family grieve for our son, father, brother, and uncle without answers, without understanding how and why his life was taken? I have looked in the grieving eyes of my own children when they asked why the police officers killed their uncle, all I could say was, "I don't know". None of us knew why, all we had were the words of witnesses and the police officers, whose recollections of that day differed. I just kept thinking to my self "if the officers weren't in the wrong why won't they just show us?" Seeing the body cam footage would've answered many of the questions we had.

For **11 weeks** our family was denied answers and access to the body cameras worn by the police officers that morning. After obtaining an Executor of Estate only one person, Dominique's father, was granted access to view the bodycam video. My father in law sat in a room and watched what had transpired that morning. With no family support, he watched his son's last living moments from the police body cam video. The way the current Kansas statute 45-254 is written lead to the city of Topeka making our family wait months not knowing what happened to our loved one and spend thousands of dollars to appoint an executor, to then endure the emotional trauma alone, watching his son die by the hands of these officers.

For this **11 weeks** our family should've been grieving, instead we were still looking for answers, still trying to comprehend why. I'm here today because I don't want another family to go through what we are going through, part of preventing that is regulating access to body cam footage. If a police officer kills anybody, that person's family should have access to body cam footage within 24 hours. The faster families have access to body cam video, the sooner they can start the grieving process for their loved one.

Thank you again for your time,

Heather Joyce