

Good Morning, Everyone.

My name is Terri O'Connor. My husband, Jim was a Corporal in the Philadelphia Police department. He had 23 years with the department, the last 15 in which he worked in the highly elite SWAT unit. On March 13, 2020, Jim was shot and killed while serving an early morning, high risk murder warrant.

Our lives were forever changed at 6:09 a.m. when Jim was pronounced dead. I last spoke with him about 11 p.m. the night prior. It was my 45th birthday. He kissed me goodbye, wished me another Happy Birthday, told me he loved me and said, "I'll see you in the morning".

I awoke to a phone call that Jim was shot, followed by police officers shortly after, escorting me to the hospital, where I saw my husbands lifeless body. It's a memory that will never escape my brain.

How did this happen? I always thought Jim was more covered with larger vests, and protective helmets. Unfortunately, he was shot in the forearm and in a small area, near the left shoulder blade, where he was not protected. What I would soon learn next about the entire situation, is a scenario I could never fully imagine.

When Jim and his team entered the house that morning, they were immediately fired upon. Approximately 12-16 shots were fired from inside that morning, two of which struck Jim. There were 10 guns, along with endless

amounts of drugs found in the tiny 1 bedroom the four men were hiding in. I should mention, a SWAT officer returned fire, striking 2 people in the house. At one point, a voice came from inside the room asking the police to stop shooting at them, because someone was shot inside the small bedroom. The officers then stopped, and had them men come out of the room, one by one. All four men, any of who could've been the potential fatal shooter, came out alive.

I could speak easily for an hour about the lengthy criminal records these 4 males had. A month before Jim's murder one of the males was arrested and let out twice for drug dealing. He had three open juvenile cases and one previous arrest as an adult. He was supposed to be on a GPS monitor, which he wasn't wearing either time. He could've been put in detention, but instead under Larry Krasner he was released on his own recognizance and no bail required. He was charged as an adult with carrying guns while selling drugs, but due to the low bail that was set, he walked out easily both times. He had many other run-ins with the law over the past few years, and was described as a major drug dealer, a flight risk, and a danger to community. None of this mattered.

The man that fired the shots that killed my husband, was charged two years prior to Jim's death for carrying firearms without a license. He got 9-23 months in prison but walked out of court that day a free man, because the court accepted as his prison term, the amount of jail time he previously served, As part of the deal the, District

Attorney agreed to drop two other charges, intentional possession of a controlled substance, and a charge of carrying firearms in public. While on probation, three different times, this same male was brought before the judge on violations of parole, and the district attorneys office allowed him to continue being on probation.

One year before Jim's murder, this same male was arrested again, this time for a direct violation of his probation. But a newly assigned Assistant District Attorney told the judge the District Attorneys office was withdrawing the drug charge. Allegedly the same month he was given the pass on the drug charge, this male committed a robbery and a murder, He was able to elude the police until March 13th, 2020.

In the months to come after, prosecutors would come to learn about 5 murders this male committed, after he proudly scraped the names into his prison cell wall. Another male that was in the room, was on parole at the time for a 2016 gun possession case, which he had served state prison time. The fourth male in the room happened to be wanted for one of the murders as the main shooter. Again, I could go on and on about this male and the many other arrests he had in the prior years, along with the rap sheets of the other three males in that room that fateful morning.

This leads us to where we are today. We have a city in shambles. We have a District Attorney who says crime is down, we'll obviously if you don't prosecute criminals, of

course it appears that way. How many second, third, fourth and even more chances are to be given? I've always said, it seems to take something personally happening to your family, to have people truly understand the repercussions of these lenient policies. The one thing that gives me some peace of mind with this case, is that these men were charged federally. This gives us the best chance these men never see the outside of a jail cell ever again. They took away something from us, that could never be replaced and need to face the most severe consequences.

I have a daughter who's father didn't get to walk her down the aisle at her wedding, A son who continues to follow in his father footsteps, trying to make him proud, while raising his two daughters who will never know their pop. And then, there's myself. I became a widow the day after I turned 45. I've come to hate my birthday. We were one month shy of our 25th wedding anniversary. I was left to figure out a life that I could've never imagined. I've said from the beginning, even if it get's me no where, I will use my voice to speak out in every way possible to speak about how Jim's death didn't need to occur. My husband got up and went to work just to do his job. If our District Attorney, Prosecutors and Judges did their job, maybe he would still be here today.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my story.