

## **“Oversight Hearing on Policing Practices and Law Enforcement Accountability”**

Chairman Jerrold Nadler and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the invitation to be here today to talk about my big brother, George. The world knows him as George, but I called him Perry. Yesterday, we laid him to rest. It was the hardest thing I've ever had to do. I'm the big brother now. So it was my job to comfort our brothers and sisters, Perry's kids, and everyone who loved him. And that's a lot of people. I have to be the strong one now, because it's what George would have done.

And me being the big brother now is why I'm here today. To do what Perry always did for us – to take care of the family and others. I couldn't take care of George the day he was killed, but maybe by speaking with you today, I can help make sure that his death isn't in vain. To make sure that he is more than another face on a t-shirt. More than another name on a list that won't stop growing.

George always made sacrifices for his family. And he made sacrifices for complete strangers. He gave the little that he had to help others. He was our gentle giant. I was reminded of that when I watched the video of his murder. He was mild mannered; he didn't fight back. He listened to the officers. He called them 'sir.' The men who took his life, who suffocated him for eight minutes and 46 seconds. He still called them 'sir' as he begged for his life.

I can't tell you the kind of pain you feel when you watch something like that. When you watch your big brother, who you've looked up to your whole life, die. Die begging for your mom.

I'm tired. I'm tired of the pain I'm feeling now and I'm tired of the pain I feel every time another black person is killed for no reason. I'm here today to ask you to make it stop. Stop the pain. Stop us from being tired.

George's calls for help were ignored. Please listen to the call I'm making to you now, to the calls of our family, and to the calls ringing out in the streets across the world. People of all backgrounds, genders and race have come together to demand change. Honor them, honor George, and make the necessary changes that make law enforcement the solution – and not the problem. Hold them accountable when they do something wrong. Teach them what it means to treat people with empathy and respect. Teach them what necessary force is. Teach them that deadly force should be used rarely and only when life is at risk.

George wasn't hurting anyone that day. He didn't deserve to die over twenty dollars. I am asking you, is that what a black man's life is worth? Twenty dollars? This is 2020. Enough is enough. The people marching in the streets are telling you enough is enough. Be the leaders that this country, this world, needs. Do the right thing.

The people elected you to speak for them, to make positive change. George's name means something. You have the opportunity here to make your names mean something, too.

If his death ends up changing the world for the better. And I think it will. I think it has. Then he died as he lived. It is on you to make sure his death isn't in vain.

I didn't get the chance to say goodbye to Perry while he was here. I was robbed of that. But, I know he's looking down on us now. Perry, look at what you did, big brother. You're changing the world. Thank you for everything. For taking care of us when you were on Earth, and for taking care of all of us now. I hope you found mama and can rest in peace and power.