

Testimony of Casey Brooks
In Support of SB870
February 27, 2020

My life before my father died was almost perfect. Even though my mom and dad split when I was young they kept a great relationship for me. I had always been a daddy's girl so that never changed, my dad was my best friend and he was a big influence on me. My dad worked hard, and for as long as I can remember he had been a cop. He worked long hours but always managed to pick me up from school any time he had the chance. He was always a big part of my life and made sure I did better than him; he pushed me to strive for excellence in everything I did in life. He became a substitute teacher when I was in elementary school just so he could be a part of my day when he could; he never missed a beat. He was there in every way he could possibly be, and for that I'm so thankful. He was by far the best father I could ever ask for. Long hours on the job never kept him away from his family and friends; family was very important to him. He was one of the most caring people anyone could have in their life, and if you knew him you knew exactly why. He had a gentle soul, a smile that would brighten up a room, and a laugh that would make you laugh. He truly had a gift at making people laugh, which is why he was so great at what he did. Before he died, I had everything I could ask for. He made sure he rewarded me for good grades; he always encouraged me to do my best in anything I did. He wanted the best for me as any dad would.

After my dad died, for a while I wasn't myself. I had lost one of the most influential people in my life and I didn't know how I would be able to move on. His life was cut short by a woman that had a previous DUI but carelessly continued to drink and drive. On NYE 2007 my dad along with several other police officers was setting out cones on I-95 to prevent trucks from getting into the downtown area during the celebrations. While the other officers took a break, my father continued to set out cones. The lady was at a bar downtown she had a couple of beers, a few shots and left the bar thinking she was in good condition to drive. As she was getting onto the highway she merged into the area my dad was in and struck and killed him; and with no hesitation she kept going. With her windshield shattered she never stopped to see if he was ok. He was rushed to shock trauma where he was pronounced dead at 12am New Year's morning. The driver that hit him, this was not her first offense, nor was it her second, or third. They estimated her BAC at the time of the crash to a 1.7- yes a 1.7. She was a professional. As my dad lay there dying, she drove home.

Life after has been very difficult. He has missed so many important milestones in my life (high school prom/Graduation, college graduation). There are still times I want to pick up the phone and call him, things I wish I could tell him and only he would understand. Jokes that to this day make me laugh that only he knew.

It has been 12 years since my dad passed away, and there's still not a day that goes by that I don't think about him. My brother and sister were really young at the time, so I hurt for them because they did not get as much time with him as I did. I will never hear his laugh again or see his smile. And what hurts the most is that this could have all been prevented. Innocent lives are taken every day because of this careless act and at some point we have to make the consequences severe enough that people will think twice before they drink and drive. I have done many things to heal this pain and to make my dad proud but ultimately I still wish he was here every day.

I ask you to please, please pass SB870, please pass the fix to Noah's Law. **Maybe, just maybe had she had an interlock from her conviction 3 months before she killed my dad, he'd still be here.**