

Lorraine Wilson

Testimony Concerning

HB1309, Criminal Procedure - Law Enforcement Procedures - Use of Force

Submitted to House Judiciary Committee

March 3, 2020

Position: Support

Honorable Judiciary Committee Members,

I am writing in support of HB1309.

I belong to a social justice group but am writing as a private citizen because this Bill means so much to me and my family.

Please allow me just a minute to express how families affected by unnecessary use of force can be affected throughout their whole lives.

My son was a victim of unnecessary use of force by a police officer in Maryland. He was young at the time (25) and even though he had just returned from duty in the military as a military police officer, he did not realize how quickly some of the police in our area can and do escalate a relatively minor situation into a dangerous one.

I will try to make this short, but my son has always respected authority and never been in trouble, so making an illegal U-turn in front of our house did not seem like a big deal to him. He is also very mild mannered and polite (although in this particular situation he admitted to becoming angry after the Police officer insulted his brother, his mother, and threatened to taser him). This all happened in front of our house and if my husband and I had not come out, I'm not sure what might have happened. He sustained bruises from being thrown to the ground and beaten, but the worst part was the trauma from being hauled off to jail and verbally and physically abused before arriving there. The charges against my son were dropped later in court. I'm not sure what discipline, if any, the police officer received, but our whole family and the 2 girls who were with my sons (on a date) were also traumatized. I say this because even though my son is now in his 40's, he still says that it makes him angry to think about it. I myself have never trusted another police officer since then. My son's twin committed suicide shortly after this incident (not directly related but awful to think he had to experience this event before he died). The very same police officer came to our house on that horrible night and spoke to me very harshly so that my husband had to intervene. It did not occur to me that this was the same policeman until my son told me later.

These things stay with families for a long time and are hard to heal. Therefore, I am hoping that you will support HB1309.

Thank you,

Lorraine Wilson

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