

5043 Thunder Hill Road
Columbia, Maryland 21045
March 3, 2023

Dear Members of the Maryland Legislative House:

I am writing in favor of HB0863 and suggesting an amendment to remove all time limits for appeal.

My godson, Clarence Edward Woods III, known to me as Eddie, was murdered in November 2008. His homicide has never been legitimately investigated. It's reasonable to look at the information I have gathered and conclude he was murdered because of his skin – he was a black man.

Under the foul, racist leadership of Dr. David Fowler at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner and Chief James Teare with the Anne Arundel Police, Eddie's murder was criminally misdocumented as a suicide. I am keeping this letter brief, but I am available to meet with any member of the house to share additional information on this matter – just contact me.

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner of Maryland is notorious for rampant corruption, including rubber stamping onto reports whatever manner of death police claim. It wasn't just Dr. Fowler, and it wasn't just white employees – the staffing composition of the entire office should have been completely changed.

It's too much to expect grieving families to have all of the information they need to follow a process they know nothing about, and to do that within a time frame so close to the death of their loved one.

Although the bill uses the wording, "Except in a case of a finding of homicide,..." the problem is when the office knows the death was a homicide but refuses to acknowledge it. Their corruption shouldn't be able to win just because of an arbitrary time limit.

The real problem that hasn't been acknowledged is the level of corruption and the rampant rubber stamping at the medical examiner's office. It's systemic. The legislature shouldn't put a time limit on the public's ability to work through that corruption.

Attached please see an article about my godson's death.

Thank you for considering my personal experience with this issue.

Sincerely,
Kristine Lockwood

ANNE ARUNDEL

Man's family petitions for homicide investigation

County police ruled death a suicide

By Carolyn Peirce
Examiner Staff Writer

Eddie Woods was a lively, outgoing musician with a rising career and close friends, so when Anne Arundel police said the 22-year-old had taken his own life, his family refused to believe it.

"He had everything to live for," said Kristine Lockwood, of Columbia, who gathered more than 300 signatures petitioning police to re-investigate the Nov. 23 death of her godson, Clarence "Eddie" Woods III, of Glen Burnie.

"It's possible that this was an accidental homicide, and it's possible that it was intentional," she said.

"By not investigating the death, police are perpetuating urban violence. If it's this easy to get away with killing someone, then why not?"

Lockwood said police ruled the death a suicide after briefly questioning the only witness, Alyssa Jackson, 16, of Pasadena, who didn't call 911 immediately and was allowed to leave the scene after giving an oral statement.

Police never tested the girl's hands for gunshot residue, which could have indicated whether she fired the weapon, Lockwood said.

Any evidence of gunshot residue on Woods' hand would likely have been destroyed while he was receiving medical attention, she added.

Alyssa said Tuesday that Woods was angry with her because another man called her cell phone while the two were at a party in Brooklyn Park.

She said they continued the argument at a friend's house on Doris Avenue in Brooklyn Park where



COURTESY PHOTO

The family and friends of Clarence "Eddie" Woods III, 22, of Glen Burnie, are asking Anne Arundel police to re-investigate his Nov. 23 death.

"By not investigating the death, police are perpetuating urban violence."

— Kristine Lockwood, godmother of Clarence "Eddie" Woods III

Woods had been staying.

During the fight, Woods "flipped out," took a gun off the dresser, sat on a stool and shot himself in the back of the head, she said.

"He was still alive, looking up and breathing heavy," Alyssa said.

But instead of calling 911, she called a friend to come over because she didn't know the address.

"She delayed calling 911, and I can't help but wonder if that was to come up with a story and get somebody out of the house," Lockwood said.

The friend, Brendan Castaneda, 18, said he rushed to the house, dialed 911 and waited by Woods' side with Alyssa.

"I didn't believe her at all, I don't see Eddie doing that," he said.

"When he left the party at my house, he was happy."

Woods was taken to University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center in Baltimore, where his family took him off life support several hours later.

Lockwood said Anne Arundel Detective Rob Cremen told her he would look into the family's concerns in the petition.

Police spokesman Sgt. John Gilmer said Tuesday the case remains open as "a death investigation" with no indication of foul play.

cpeirce@baltimoreexaminer.com

Eddie's situation was noted in the Baltimore Examiner today...
<http://www.baltimoreexaminer.com/opinion/1214emsedit.html>

10 Worst Ideas of the Week
Shoddy police work

The family of a dead man had to beg police to investigate their son's death.

The details: The Anne Arundel police really screwed this one up. They let the only person who witnessed Eddie Woods' death go without extensive questioning or testing her for gunshot residue. She even delayed calling 911 and somehow failed to arouse suspicion. It's great that police finally reopened the case, but it's what they should have done in the first place.