

Dear Judiciary Committee,

My name is Beatriz. I come before you today to advocate for the passage of Senate Bill 44, titled Reckless and Negligent Driving—Death of Another—Must Appear Violation.

I was heartbroken to learn that my family is not the only one facing this injustice: the inability to confront the person who took our loved one away. It is devastating to accept that my brother's life was valued at just \$1,000 or even less in the form of a fine, allowing Mr. Savory to walk free after taking his life. Other families, like Sherry and Christian, deserve the closure we have been denied. Writing this serves as a testament to my commitment to honor them, and my brother and mother deserve to find peace in the face of this struggle.

Sherry was a vibrant member of her community whose life was cut short when she was struck head-on by a vehicle driven carelessly. The impact of this devastating accident not only claimed her life but also left her husband, Thomas, to grapple with the consequences. He survived, but the accident resulted in severe, permanent injuries that resulted in the loss of both his arm and leg, forever altering the course of his life. Travis "Christian," a bright and youthful 19-year-old, was the unfortunate victim of an accident when a driver failed to yield at a critical intersection. His injuries were catastrophic, leading to a tragic loss; he succumbed to his injuries just three days later in the hospital, leaving behind a grieving family and friends who mourned the potential of a life that was beginning.

Lastly, my brother Jonathan worked part-time as a limo driver to support his children. On March 3, 2024, at 4 a.m., he was hit by a drunk driver who did not even realize he had struck him. At the time of the accident, the driver was going 33 mph, which caused my brother to fly 22 feet from the impact. Jonathan lay lifeless on the ground and ultimately suffered severe injuries, including the loss of an eye and 22 skull fractures. Tragically, he succumbed to his injuries two days later, on March 5.

This loss has shattered my family, and we are still searching for ways to heal. My mother has lost the will to carry on, and my nephews miss their father deeply. Witnessing my mother mourn my best friend has been haunting and exhausting. I can see the sadness in her eyes and the dullness in her tone. I am also mourning my mother and brother. She seems like a shell of her former self, merely going through the motions of life now. She will never be the person I once knew. I continue to hold onto fragments of memories of him as we navigate through this heartbreaking journey.

All three of these families have lost someone incredibly important and beloved, and we stand united against the injustice we have faced. I urge you to support the passage of this bill today; we cannot allow this tragedy to affect another family. The heavy burden of unmet justice weighs on these victims' families every day. With an average of 572 fatalities reported in Maryland, far too many lives have been lost to "accidents." It is time to enact the Sherry and Christian Law to ensure that individuals cannot simply pay a fine and evade their responsibility. We will not become another statistic or allow another family to suffer this heartache. I respectfully call on the members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee to join our cause and pass Senate Bill 44.