

Protesters in Ohio call for charges against killer cop following release of bodycam footage showing shooting of Ta'Kiya Young

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This past Friday and Sunday in Columbus, Ohio, protesters peacefully took to the streets demanding justice for Ta'Kiya Young and her unborn daughter, following the partial release of heavily edited police body camera footage. The footage, released on Friday before the Labor Day weekend, confirms that Young, a 21-year-old pregnant mother of two and aspiring social worker, posed no threat to police when she was shot and killed on August 24.

Following the release of the tape, Young's family identified the killer cop as Connor Grubb. The Blendon Township Police Department, citing "Marsy's Law" which was ostensibly created to shield victims of crimes from being publicly identified, have refused to confirm or deny Grubb's identity.

Blendon Township, as have many other departments in Ohio, have used "Marsy's Law" to shield the identities of police. According to open source reporting, Grubb has worked as an officer for Blendon Township since 2019 and is currently in the US Marine Corps.

Blendon Township Police Chief John Belford has claimed in multiple statements that the two Blendon Township police officers who engaged Young on August 24 were "victims" of Young. In a written statement released on Friday, Belford claimed that "officer #1" is a "victim of attempted vehicular assault" and that "officer #2" is a victim of "misdemeanor assault" because his arm was allegedly, briefly, caught in the car window as Young slowly rolled away after being shot.

"Officer #1" is still on paid administrative leave,

while "Officer #2" resumed duty this past Friday.

The footage released on Friday by Chief Belford refutes police claims that Young was attempting to use her vehicle as a weapon to injure the police. The tape shows the killer cop putting himself directly in front of the vehicle, even though it was already running, in order to give himself legal cover to shoot Young.

The tape also confirms that the two cops immediately escalated the situation when they were told by an employee that they thought Young had stolen something from the grocery store. In the short videos, police repeatedly yell at Young to get out of the car, accuse of her stealing and bang on her window.

Young, never once displaying a weapon, calmly refused to get out of the car and rejected claims that she stole anything.

Despite the fact that Young did not have a weapon, within seconds of coming up on the vehicle, Grubb pulled his pistol out and began pointing it at her with his finger on the trigger. Young had not begun to accelerate her car when Grubb first pointed his gun at her. On the tape, Young is heard asking the cop "Are you going to shoot me?"

In contrast to Belford's claims, Young is shown turning her steering wheel far to the right in an attempt to avoid hitting Grubb. As Young slowly started to accelerate, Grubb leaned forward and shoots once through the windshield, appearing to strike Young in the face/head.

As Young's vehicle slowly rolled forward, both police continued to yell at the dying woman to "stop" and "get the f*** out" of the vehicle. The tape abruptly cuts off while Young was still in the vehicle. While police have claimed that they administered first aid to Young after smashing her window, that is not seen on the tape provided.

Also not seen on the tape is any evidence of stolen liquor bottles or other merchandise. To date, neither the police, nor Kroger, have provided any video proof that Young walked out of the store with unpaid items.

Following the release of the footage, Sean Walton, the attorney representing the Young family, called for the police who shot and killed Young to be fired and charged. Walton told the Associated Press in an interview last Friday, "The video did nothing but confirm their fears that Ta'Kiya was murdered unjustifiably ... and it was just heartbreaking for them to see Ta'Kiya having her life taken away under such ridiculous circumstances."

Since her killing, multiple protests at the Kroger grocery store parking lot where Young was shot, and in Columbus have been held. Despite the overwhelmingly peaceful character of the protests, local residents have informed the *World Socialist Web Site* that police have deployed drones to collect "intelligence" on workers and youth exercising their First Amendment rights.

On Friday, over 50 anti-police-violence protesters, led by the Ohio People's Justice Project, marched on N. High Street through the Short North Arts District in Columbus. Protesters chanted "Black Lives Matter" and carried signs reading "stop killer cops," "Blendon Township PD murders mothers," "cops lie," and "Justice for Ta'Kiya Young."

On Sunday afternoon and evening, the People's Justice Project led another event. Over 100 people marched in Columbus, followed by a rally in Goodale Park. At the rally, community members, victims of police violence and protesters called for the officer who shot and killed Young to be fired and charged in her death. Protesters also demanded accountability for several other recent victims of police violence in Ohio.

including Donovan Lewis and Casey Goodson Jr.

Speaking at the rally, Malissa Thomas St. Clair, Young's former 7th grade teacher, rejected police claims that Young used her vehicle as a weapon. "That car was going no more than 2 miles per hour. If anything, that would have been a bump ... that man would not have died." St. Clair added that Young was turning the wheel to avoid the cop and protect her unborn child. "We truly believe Ta'Kiya Young was murdered," she said. "Ta'Kiya Young's daughter was murdered. And we need accountability."

Speaking to the *Daily Mail*, St. Clair seemed to confirm, via witness video, that the police shot Young in the face. Young told the paper that Young's baby daughter was due in November.

"She had already named her daughter, she already has two sons, and she was very much looking forward to becoming a mother of a daughter. That was something very special to her."



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