

March 19th 2009

Dear chairman Caltagirone and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Hello my name is Gretchen LeClaire,

On March 19th 2004 my husband Sgt. Joseph LeClaire was serving a warrant on a fugitive along with 3 other Officers. Officer Carl DiBorello, Vincent DeSandro and Eric Jones. They entered at 1:45am at Fishers Crossing apartments on Stenton ave. in Germantown.

The Officers knocked on the door and identified themselves. A woman answered the door and Joe asked , "where is Darien Houser, we

have a warrant for his arrest. and she pointed to the bedroom. As they walked towards the bedroom Shot's ran out striking all 3 Officers

First Striking Joe in the Torso, along with Crlos as well, then Officer Deborello in the hand. Joe dropped behind a couch and returned

fire, repeating, "Drop your Weapon". Darien Houser refused too put down his weapon and continued firing his weapon at the Officers.

Joe radioed it in while providing cover fire so the other two Officers could be pulled to safety by Officer Eric Jones. Houser made an

attempt for the window, and saw Joe behind the couch and fired one last time Striking my husband with a fatal shot to the head. When

these Officers make an arrest, they research their backgrounds and they knew how violent this individuals past history was. Charges

stemmed from attempted murder, to drug trafficking to raping a 12yr old little girl, which was the reason they were there that evening.

Amazingly when he went to court, they found drugs on him. How is this even possible he was incarcerated. How can the Parole

Board release these violent criminals back into our society when they know how dangerous these individuals are. My life has been

shattered and I will never have closure. When I hear on the news that we our losing Police Officers being killed in the line of duty, I

relive that pain all over again. This has to stop. When you go to Washington D.C. and participate in Police week. you hear the

names of hundreds of Officers who made the Ultimate Sacrifice . Your surrounded by a sea of people all sharing the same pain of

losing a loved one. Unfortunately the stories we share all have one element in common. These criminals who committed these

crimes have such a long record of violence that they should have never been released from prison. and put back into society.

Today March 19th is the 5yr. anniversary of my husbands death. Going on with out him is a daily

struggle. Just trying to survive

one day at a time. No more will hear his laughter, his singing or his gentle whispers in my ear. This is a constant battle that we

the survivors are facing and have to deal with. Looking at the new widows at a funeral and to see them clutching on to their families

is so painful for me to watch, because it happened to me. These criminals who get 3 meals a day a bed to sleep in and a tv to

watch are probably laughing when they see another Officer being killed. The Parole Board has to change this, to give us

assurance that we can be safe. Please listen to us, to enforce this and keep them in jail. Read their background very carefully

before you let them out again. and just don't have them pay for bail, your just passing the buck. I'am speaking on behalf of all

the Police survivors who have lost a loved one by a brutal killer who has no respect for life. Joe was a man with great respect,

dignity and charisma. His department misses him so much. He was a leader he made his unit what it is today. The Parole

Board has never lost a person in the Line of Duty, or had a shoot out with these offenders. This will stop if you put an end to

this. Our men in Blue along side with the Warrant Unit are faced with the most dangerous criminals and they all have weapons.

I hope that you will enforce stronger guidelines when paroling prisoners so we are not faced with another tragedy to our Law

Enforcement Officers. Thank You...

Sincerely,


Gretchen LeClaire