

Letter to Michigan Officials Regarding the Shooting Death of Renisha McBride

The following is a letter sent to Michigan officials regarding the death of [Renisha McBride](#).

November 14, 2013

Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy
1441 St. Antoine
St. Detroit, MI 48226

Dearborn Heights Police Chief Lee Gavin
25637 Michigan Ave
Dearborn Heights, MI 48125

Dear Ms. Worthy and Mr. Gavin:

On behalf of the National Organization for Women, its members, supporters, and chapters in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, I am writing to urge you to take decisive action regarding the homicide of Renisha McBride.

There is no dispute that Renisha McBride was an unarmed black teenager seeking help in Dearborn Heights — a predominantly white neighborhood — after a car accident. She was killed by shotgun at the hands of the homeowner. According to news reports, the man who killed her has offered two confused stories, claiming that the shooting was both accidental and justified.

This is too clever by half. Through his lawyer, McBride's killer claims he was in fear of his life. However, this lawyer has pointed to nothing other than the color of McBride's skin to explain her client's fear.

We cannot live in a society in which an unarmed black teenager can be killed simply because a white person with a gun says they were afraid. That would be a society in which no black teenager is safe; every public official sworn to uphold the basic values of our country must reject this notion. I urge you, as officers of the law charged with the solemn duty of ensuring the safety of all — not just the privileged few — to conduct a full, fair, and transparent investigation into the circumstances of McBride's death, and to hold her killer accountable for his actions.

In a nation of laws and not of men, Renisha McBride's family deserves no less.

Sincerely,
Terry O'Neill, President
National Organization for Women