

Good morning, Chairperson Allen and members of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety. My name is Donte Massey. I am a resident of Ward 7, a relative caregiver to my 3 younger siblings who are 11, 15 and 16 years old, and a proud member of the DC KinCare Alliance Community Advisory Board. The mission of DC KinCare Alliance is to support relative caregivers who step up to raise children in their families in times of crisis when the children's parents are not able to care for them.

I am here today to testify about the gun violence in my community and how it impacts my family every day. My older sister was shot in the back of her neck right in front of my house on March 13, 2020. She had just brought my 2 younger brothers and younger sister home. As she was getting into her car, two groups of people starting shooting at each other and she was caught in the crossfire. My sister had to go to the hospital to have the bullet removed but they sent her right home afterward because they were worried about COVID-19. The doctor said it was a miracle that she survived.

A week or so later, my cousin was walking to my house. Right on my street, he was shot in his thigh. He ran to my house and knocked on my door but I wasn't home at the time to let him in. My neighbor came out and walked him to a police car parked nearby and then called me. The officer called an ambulance and my cousin was in the hospital for two days. They had trouble stopping the bleeding. I couldn't visit him because of COVID-19.

Groups are shooting at each other all the time right by my house. They don't care whether it's day or night or whether the police are right there or not. They have no fear of getting caught or remorse for their actions. I am afraid for my younger brothers and sister to go outside. I have trouble sleeping because I am afraid of a stray bullet and when I do sleep, I am often woken

up by gunshots. I would like to move but I have a Rapid Rehousing voucher and I am having trouble getting the people at DHS to pay for my rent at a new location.

MPD officers are always on my street but they don't get out of their cars until after the shooting stops. The shooters get away and they treat bystanders like they are suspects. There are two cameras on either end of my street but nothing in between.

We need more cameras on my street and we need MPD officers who walk the neighborhood and who get to know the people on my street and they need to treat us with respect. If they got to know us, then they would know who lives here and who doesn't and people would feel like they could tell the officers what's going on without being targeted themselves.

What I want from the Gun Violence Prevention Emergency Operations Center is a safer city and a safer neighborhood--safe enough for me to feel comfortable letting my younger brothers and sister go outside, safe enough for me to feel comfortable walking my dog, and safe enough for me to talk to MPD officers after a shooting without worrying that they are going to put me in handcuffs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions.