

PRESS RELEASE

The shooting of Ashli Babbitt on January 6, 2021, by an unidentified U.S. Capitol Police Officer was an unjustified use of deadly force which violated her constitutional rights. It is clear from video footage that Ashli did not pose a danger to the officer, or any other person when she was shot. Ashli was unarmed. She did not assault anyone. She did not threaten to harm anyone. There was no excuse for taking her life.

It is a universal law enforcement standard that a police officer should use no more force than necessary to accomplish a lawful purpose. At 5' 2" tall and 110 pounds, an arrest of Ashli could have been accomplished by a single trained officer with a set of handcuffs. At the time of the shooting, there were over a half-dozen police officers in close proximity to the Speaker's door where Ashli was standing. Some of those officers had just allowed protesters access to the door by stepping aside. Other officers, dressed in full tactical gear, stood among the protesters just a few feet behind the door. Still, others stood casually at the opposite end of the Speaker's Lobby, unconcerned with the activities of Ashli and the protesters around her. All of these officers were in a position to have aided in the apprehension of Ashli if it was necessary. Given her background as a 14-year veteran of the Air Force, it is likely that Ashli would have complied with simple verbal commands, thereby making the use of any force unnecessary.

However, the officer who shot Ashli never attempted to arrest her. Nor did he call on his fellow officers to arrest her. Instead, he fired a shot into her chest. Witnesses confirm that the officer did not give Ashli a single verbal warning prior to firing. In fact, Ashli was not even aware that the officer was present, as he was located in the doorway of a room off to the side of her field of vision.

To date, the officer who shot Ashli has not been identified. Neither the Capitol Police nor any other governmental authority has given an account of the facts surrounding the shooting. There has been no official explanation or justification for the use of lethal force in this matter. This lack of transparency impedes public scrutiny which is necessary to hold government officials accountable in a free society. It also interferes with the ability of Ashli's family to obtain justice for their loss.

My law firm and I represent Ashli's husband and family members. We will continue to investigate this matter. We intend to take appropriate legal action when our investigation has been completed. We call upon the Capitol Police as well as the United States Congress to make public the facts and circumstances of Ashli's shooting.

If you have information regarding this matter, you may contact us and receive updates on Twitter at Justice for Ashli Babbitt @ForAshli. Emails can also be sent to the address below.

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