



September 17, 2020

[The Story of Gugsu Abe Dabela \(Video\)](#)

Testimony of **Albab Dabela** at the *CT Police Transparency & Accountability Task Force* Listening Session

“Good evening.

My name is Albab Dabela, and I am here tonight to share with the Task Force my family’s ordeal of the past 6-plus years.

I’m here to share with you an example of how the LACK of Police Transparency and Accountability not only benefits the Police generally but is also enables Police officers and the State’s Attorneys to **PROTECT** murderers (whether they are police officers, firemen or civilians).

On April 5, 2014, someone in Connecticut killed my younger brother, Attorney Gugsu Abraham Dabela. Someone literally blew his brains out and left him to die on the side of the road in the beautiful, prosperous Town of Redding Connecticut where he lived.

The Town’s then police chief Douglas Fuchs – from his bed – in the middle of the night – decided that the fatal gunshot wound – to the back, right side of Abe’s head, following a motor vehicle accident was **SELF-INFLICTED**.

Just think about that.

Mr. Fuchs did not visit the crime scene. He did not call in the Major Crimes Unit. He did not have the benefit of an autopsy, or a GSR test, or any ballistics testing whatsoever. His officers hadn’t even recovered a bullet.

Six and a half years later – the bullet that killed Abe is still missing. My brother’s case file is so lacking, that no one has yet been able to forensically determine what happened to him.

All because Mr. Douglas Fuchs, an ordinary human being who happens to be a police officer, said “self-inflicted”.

His statement set in motion a series of events designed to prevent the identification of my brother’s killer. Yet this statement has NEVER been rigorously questioned by any state or federal authority, because there are no laws that empower any body to independently review police actions.

The only person empowered to question Mr. Fuchs is the Danbury State’s Attorney, Mr. Stephen Sedenksy, who has co-signed Fuchs’ actions from Day 1. In fact, in the days immediately following Abe’s death, when I requested removal of the case from Redding, Mr. Sedensky said to me that he had no reason to doubt Fuchs because he “works with the Redding police every day”.

My family has sought the assistance of the NAACP, we have presented to Dierdre Daly and Mike Gustafson at the US Attorneys office. We have appealed to Congressmen, Senators, the State Police and the Crime Lab. Despite well-meaning people at every turn, no one has the authority to interrogate Mr. Fuchs and his Staff. No one has the authority to conduct an independent, objective investigation into Abe’s death.

We have literally spent hundreds of thousands of dollars trying to properly investigate Abe's death. The economic and emotional toll of this lack of Transparency and Accountability on my family is immeasurable.

The system is broken, and it's letting murderers be protected by POLICEMEN and PROSECUTORS.

I am happy to know that you are revisiting these laws and regulations, and I make myself available to discuss my brother's case in detail with any members of the Task Force who may be interested.

If you would like to do your own research – my brother's name was Gugsu Abraham Dabela, and he was affectionately known as "Abe". The campaign to raise awareness of his story is known as "Justice4Abe" (with the number "4") and can be found on the [web](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) under that hashtag.

Abe's life mattered.

I will submit a more detailed written statement with a number of asks for the Task Forces' consideration regarding the *Duty to Intervene* and the development of an *Independent External Investigating Authority*. I ask that members of the Task Force review those asks in my brother's honor.

Some highlights of our asks are as follows:

- a. Please make sure that that "Duty to Intervene" is widely known, enforceable and ACTUALLY enforced.
- b. Please include a method for CIVILIANS (Victims and Victim's families) to report wrongdoing to an independent review board.
- c. When you create an Independent External Investigating Authority, please EXPAND the authority to include ANY suspicious death of a person of color, not only deadly force by police officers – because the onus cannot be on the Victim's FAMILY to prove an officer killed someone, especially in a case like ours where the Police claim that all Dash Cams and Body Cams on the scene were conveniently turned off.
- d. Please remember that there are police departments where there is no "pattern and practice" of racial animus because there isn't a "pattern and practice" of Black folks moving to Towns like Redding.
- e. Please remember that in addition to the larger metropolitan areas, there are people of color in Towns like Redding.
- f. Please remember that Towns like Redding are often too small to generally need a Community Review Board, or are too insular for a Community Review Board to be objective.

Thank you."

****End of Statement****

Our family's asks of the Task Force are as follows:

(1) Towards the Duty to Intervene:

- a. Please make sure that that "Duty to Intervene" is widely known, enforceable and ACTUALLY enforced.

- b. Please ensure that the training protocols include a means for each and every police officer to be reminded regularly that it is mandatory that police officers report misconduct and that they intervene when they see wrongdoing by their peers (including their superiors), with criminal penalties if they fail to do so.
- c. Please include a means for officers to feel safe from retaliation for reporting wrongdoing.
- d. Please include a method for CIVILIANS (Victims and Victim's families) to report wrongdoing to an independent review board, specifying which officers have knowledge of the wrongdoing and which should be investigated for failing to intervene.

(2) Towards the goal of developing an Independent External Investigating Authority:

- a. Please EXPAND the remit of authority to include ANY suspicious death of a person of color. (Not only deadly force by police officers – because the onus cannot be on the Victim's Family to prove an officer killed someone. Esp. in case like ours where the police claim that all Dash Cams and Body Cams on the scene were turned off.)
- b. In Abe's case, there is no "pattern and practice" of racial animus because there isn't a "pattern and practice" of Black folks moving to Redding Connecticut. This should NOT mean that Reddingites or their firemen or police force can murder Black people within the Town's police jurisdiction without Transparency and Accountability.
- c. Please create a centralized Serious Incident Review Board that is empowered to review any and all cases involving police misconduct (and failures to objectively investigate) incidents involving people of color.

Please remember that in addition to the larger metropolitan areas, there are people of color in the Towns like Redding. Please remember that Towns like Redding are often too small for a Community Review Board or too insular for the Community Review Board to be objective

- d. Please create a means for Victims and Victim's families like my own to bring complaints in a centralized forum more attuned to issues of implicit racial animus and anti-black violence.