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**To: All Media:**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Tue., June 28, 2022**

## **Family of Herman Whitfield, III Responds to Critical Incident Video**

The family of Herman Whitfield III responds to IMPD's release of the Critical Incident Video (CIV) with two major points. First, the video is a selective and biased account of the events. Second, the entire body cam videos capturing the events of April 25, 2022, leading to Herman's death should be released. To date IMPD has refused to release the entirety of the videos to the family or to the public.

The CIV is biased in that it selectively includes narration and text to present a false narrative of what happened and leaves out important points which should be acknowledge by IMPD but which the CIV shows.

For example, the CIV narration and text says that after about 10 minutes of not responding to the officers, Herman rushed into the kitchen and started throwing items around. The only item Herman threw was when he picked up an empty plastic water pitcher, and was told to put it down, and in response he tossed it into the air. He did not throw anything at anybody. Second, the narration and text says Herman rushed towards an officer, but Herman was simply moving from room to room. Officer Sanchez's body cam clearly shows the officer laying in wait in the dining room with his taser pointed at the open kitchen door, waiting for Herman to come into the dining room, and then he shot him with the Taser when he did. Herman did not rush anybody.

The CIV narration and text are also revealing for what they leaves out. While one can clearly hear on the video Herman calling out four times, "I can't breathe" the narration and included text are silent on this and fail to mention it. While IMPD says its officers are trained to quickly sit restrained individuals up from a prone position to facilitate breathing, the narration and text do not mention this, and do fail to note that officers leave Herman in the prone position with weight on his back for over three minutes until medics arrive.

Mr. Whitfield did not present a danger to the officers, and there was no need to taser him. Moreover, the officers violated their own training in keeping Mr. Whitfield handcuffed face down after he was restrained, and after he had told them he couldn't breathe, and when he was not moving or breathing, which led to this death. For over twenty-five years, the policing community has agreed that officers should not keep a restrained individual in the prone position because of the significant risk of positional asphyxia, i.e., suffocation because of body position. Mr. Whitfield, who was in his family home, needed professional mental health care, not the use of excessive deadly force.

The Whitfield family calls on IMPD to honestly respond to these important issues and not present a biased and false narrative of Herman's death. All body cam videos should be released, and IMPD should honestly respond to the misconduct of its officers which led to Herman's death.

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