



RICHARD A WAPLES
Attorney at Law
rwaples@wapleshanger.com
TEL 317-357-0903
FAX 317-357-0275

To: All Media:

PRESS RELEASE

Thur., July 21, 2022

**Family of Herman Whitfield, III Responds to Coroner's Verdict
"Homicide"**

The family of Herman Whitfield III responds to the Marion County Coroner's Autopsy released today finding Herman Whitfield's death a homicide. The Coroner's specific findings were:

CAUSE OF DEATH

Cardiopulmonary arrest in the setting of law enforcement subdual, prone restraint, and conducted electrical weapon use

OTHER CONTRIBUTING CONDITIONS

Morbid obesity; Hypertensive cardiovascular disease

MANNER OF DEATH

Homicide

The Autopsy Report is attached.

The Coroner's findings are consistent with the body cam videos showing police officers shooting Mr. Whitfield with a taser then restraining him face down even after handcuffing and after he says "I can't breathe." The autopsy report is consistent with the family's federal lawsuit filed against the City of Indianapolis and the officers who caused Herman's death.

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 by 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 death. Mr. Whitfield, who was in his family home, needed professional mental health care, not the use of deadly force.

The Whitfield family calls upon the Indianapolis Police Department to release all body cam videos which depict their son's unnecessary death. They also call upon the City to immediately expand its crisis intervention teams to be available 24/7 so that this type of tragedy is not repeated. IMPD should also honestly respond to the misconduct of its officers which led to Herman's death.

FMI:

Israel Nunez Cruz
CRUZ LAW FIRM
148 E. Market Street, Suite 501
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
TEL: (317) 423-9668
EMAIL: icruzlawfirm@gmail.com

Richard A. Waples
WAPLES & HANGER
410 N. Audubon Road
Indianapolis, Indiana 46219
TEL: (317) 201-0596
EMAIL: rwaples@wapleshanger.com