

April 26, 2005

Chief Dean Esserman  
Providence Police Department  
325 Washington Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Col. Esserman:

Our organizations join with you and other law enforcement professionals in mourning the tragic death of Detective Sgt. James Allen. We know this is a difficult time. We understand the devastating effects on his colleagues in the Providence Police Department, and indeed, on law enforcement officers throughout the state.

We recognize you are examining your Department's procedures to determine how this happened and prevent similar tragedies. We appreciate the steps taken that night to order supervision teams for Esteban Carpio's protection as he was transported between the hospital, police station and ACI, and to take photographs throughout the process.

We also commend the speed at which a joint investigation has begun, led by the FBI, to determine the circumstances surrounding the physical injuries of Mr. Carpio. It is in everyone's best interest to resolve promptly any questions about his arrest and treatment.

To that end, we do want to note that beyond the evidence that (according to news reports) is being collected in the joint investigation, and specifically the gathering of information from the parties to Mr. Carpio's arrest and detention, we assume that other confirmation about that night's events is available. In particular, third-party eyewitness accounts and/or surveillance camera evidence are likely to provide independent corroboration of the nature of Mr. Carpio's injuries at various junctures during that night.

Your Department and the other agencies involved in this investigation may already have done so, but if not, we urge that immediate steps be taken to preserve this evidence before memories fade or tapes are re-used:

- Witnesses at AS220 may be able to describe Mr. Carpio's condition prior to his arrest.
- Between AS220 and 150 Washington Street where Mr. Carpio was arrested, private surveillance cameras may be in use (i.e., on Empire and Washington Streets) which could provide footage of his condition. There may also be witnesses to his apprehension.
- Eyewitness and video surveillance evidence should be available from Rhode Island Hospital, where he was taken after his arrest, and from the Providence Public Safety Complex, where he was returned to before being taken to the ACI.
- At the ACI, video recording, logging information and witness statements should be available.

We wish to stress that this letter is not an attempt to place responsibility on any individual or entity for Mr. Carpio's injuries. We do not know what happened, and are encouraging our

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communities to be patient and await results of the investigation. As you know, concerns about police brutality pervade the minority community in Providence. Here, there is an opportunity to definitively dispel those concerns with visual, testimonial and other evidence.

By cc of this letter, we are also requesting that such evidence be gathered without delay, to the extent jurisdictionally appropriate, by the FBI, State Police, Attorney General and Corrections.

Finally, and just as importantly, we request that full disclosure of the investigation and the visual evidence obtained be provided to the public as expeditiously as possible. Our organizations have received numerous phone calls from the public about this incident. Full and timely disclosure will bolster the community's support of the inquiry and its ultimate findings.

The devastating nature of the murder of Detective Allen cannot be understated. At the same time, as we know you appreciate, it is precisely at times like these that the rights of criminal defendants must be respected in order to demonstrate the preeminence of the rule of law in our system of criminal justice.

Thank you for your consideration of this. We await the results of your investigation and again express our sorrow at this tragic loss.

Sincerely,

Michael Evora, Executive Director  
R.I. Commission for Human Rights  
(180 Westminster Street, Providence RI 02903)

James Vincent, President  
R.I. Affirmative Action Professionals  
(c/o RI Housing, 44 Washington Street, Providence RI 02903)

Dennis Langley, Executive Director  
Urban League of Rhode Island  
(246 Prairie Avenue, Providence RI 02905)

John Hardiman  
Public Defender  
(100 North Main Street, Providence RI 02903)

Steven Brown, Executive Director  
Rhode Island Affiliate, American Civil Liberties Union  
(128 Dorrance Street, Suite 220, Providence RI 02903)

Joseph T. Fowlkes, Jr. [Former President, Providence Chapter, NAACP]  
(c/o Urban League of RI, 246 Prairie Avenue, Providence RI 02905)

CC: FBI, State Police, Attorney General, Director of Corrections

