

Good evening.

My name is Anna Duke , and I am a resident of District 12. I have Bipolar I disorder and in 2017, I had a manic episode that led to 911 being called by my family. Instead of receiving emergency mental healthcare, I was placed in handcuffs and almost forced into a squad car, until my family was able to convince them to take me away, still handcuffed, in an ambulance instead. I am almost certain the only reason why I survived to testify in front of you today is because I'm white. Black bipolar men like Walter Wallace Jr, are murdered by the police when their mothers call the police for help during a manic episode. Cops don't help during mental health crises, they just add armed squads ready to escalate into an already charged situation.

As a Baltimore city resident, I echo Organizing Black and CJSJ's demand that \$100 million dollars be cut from BPD's budget and invested into Black communities, the creation of a \$30 million dollar community wellness trust fund to be governed through a participatory budgeting process, and the removal of police entirely from responses to mental health distress, substance use, sex work, homelessness, and other quality-of-life issues.

You need to remove police entirely from responses to mental health distress, substance use, sex work, homelessness, and other quality-of-life issues. We demand Baltimore create an alternative to 911 that does not dispatch police to connect people in crisis with the mental health, housing, treatment and/or harm reduction resources they need to live with dignity.

Thank you.