

## Letter 9/15/2024 to Sheriff Campbell

Dear Sheriff Campbell,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the tragic death of Sonya Massey and the subsequent revelations about the circumstances surrounding the incident. Your public acknowledgment of the department's failure to protect Ms. Massey is a necessary first step, but I believe the systemic issues underlying this tragedy require a more comprehensive and immediate response.

The repeated failures of law enforcement to protect innocent lives are a profound indictment of our system. As a physician with decades of experience in healthcare, I understand the critical importance of prevention. It is disheartening to see such a fundamental principle neglected in a field as vital as law enforcement.

The hiring of an officer with a questionable past, coupled with the department's response to subsequent red flags about this officer's behavior, highlights a clear breakdown in the screening and oversight processes. Furthermore, the department's reliance on outdated policing methods, as evidenced by the tragic outcome of Ms. Massey's case, underscores the urgent need for reform.

I urge you to consider implementing innovative policing models, such as the Community Assistance and Life Liaison (CALL) program in St. Petersburg, Florida. (press release: <https://gulfcoastjewishfamilyandcommunityservices.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CALL-program-announcement-final-1.pdf> )

This program successfully integrates mental health professionals and social workers into the law enforcement response, demonstrating a more effective and compassionate approach to community safety.

By adopting a proactive stance and implementing evidence-based reforms, the Sangamon County Sheriff's Office can begin to rebuild trust with the community and prevent future tragedies. I am available to discuss this matter further and offer any assistance within my expertise.

Sincerely,

David Bernstein, MD

Geriatrician and Concerned Citizen