

United States Senator Amy Klobuchar

March 5, 2020

Dear County Attorney Freeman,

I met with the family of Myon Burrell on Tuesday. It is clear that the family has much love for their son, brother and husband. As I told them, I believe that if any injustice was done in the quest for justice for Tyesha Edwards, it must be addressed.

As you know and acknowledged in the initial case review, Myon Burrell's case—involving the murder of 11-year old Tyesha Edwards—was tried twice by the Hennepin County Attorney's Office: once when I was county attorney and then again after that verdict was reversed when you were county attorney. Two other convictions related to Tyesha's murder—those of defendants Ike Tyson and Hans Williams—were not reversed. While the second trial and conviction of Myon Burrell occurred after I left the office, I continue to feel an obligation to ensure that justice is done.

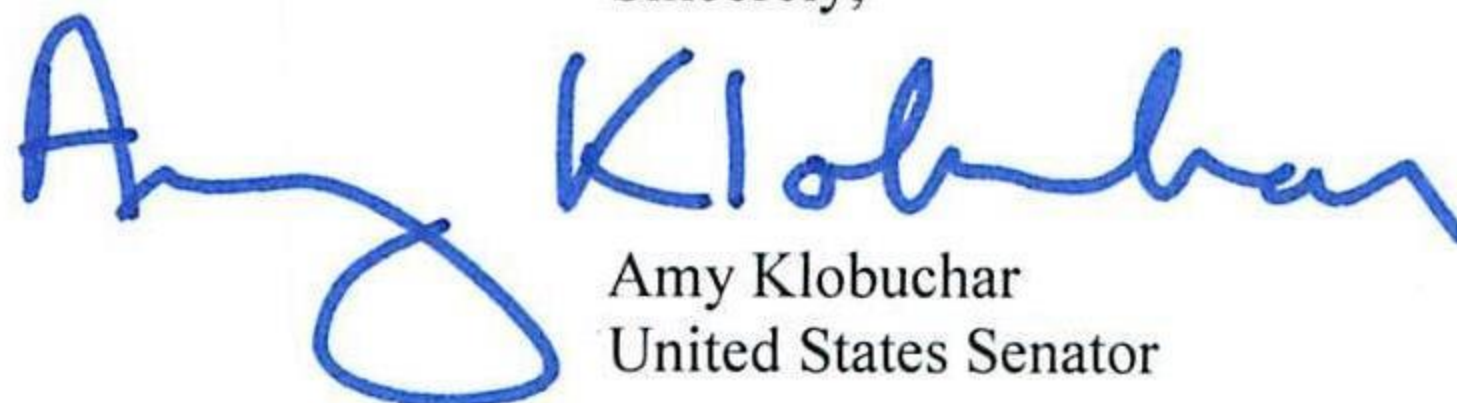
That is why, in addition to my request for a review of the new and old evidence in this case, I am asking you to call for an independent investigation and an independent review of the case. As you are aware, significant concerns about the evidence and police investigation have been raised by a press investigation, by members of the Hennepin County community, and by Myon's family. For that reason I believe that your office should initiate an independent review of the case and the evidence.

Over the years the Hennepin County Attorney's Office has led the way in making many reforms to the criminal justice system, including your work in setting up a nationally recognized drug court and domestic abuse service center. During my tenure as Hennepin County Attorney we worked with the Innocence Project on a DNA review, pioneered a new form of eyewitness identification to reduce racial misidentifications, and advocated for videotaped interrogations across the country.

Since I have left the office, new conviction integrity work has occurred in prosecutors' offices across the country. Many offices include Conviction Integrity Units, something I support. In recent years, work is also being done in the area of sentencing integrity to allow the system to look back at sentences to ensure that they are just. I think these are worthy and important ideas that advance the cause of justice. I will continue to advocate that our federal, state and individual offices throughout the country undertake these reviews.

As you know, I have much respect for the Hennepin County Attorney's Office and the people who work there. While I am no longer the county attorney and cannot order an independent review of this case, I believe that justice requires an independent investigation.

Sincerely,


Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator