

Good evening ladies and gentlemen of the Puerto Rican and black caucus. My name is Yolanda Ortiz and I'm born and raised in Hartford Ct. I'm a single mom of three boys. One son in spirit and two sons in physical form. Today is the 25th of February. Which is twenty days to the third year from the day I received that phone call that every mom dreads. The day I received the phone call I was laying on the bed. I knew that something happened to Keon because my phone kept ringing. I couldn't answer the phone fast enough. I was moving in slow motion. I told my kids father something happened to Keon. I felt it. Finally I called the number back and I was informed that Keon had been shot. My body instantly went cold and numb. I told the other person on the phone go get my son. Bring him to the hospital. Does he have in a jacket? Is he cold? Did he eat. Please Dean get my son. With no money in my pockets or in my bank acct I called everybody to help me catch a flight to Hartford. I ran up and down the stairs and street yelling and screaming from the pit of my stomach to the top of my lungs. I wasn't getting to him fast enough. My son Keon Huff Jr was only 15 years old when he was murdered in a hallway on Garden St in Hartford Ct and left to die. He was murdered in the same streets that raised me. He laid on the cold ground bleeding profusely from a gun shot wound to the head by someone that he thought he can trust. With no witnesses around the killer pretty much got away with murder. There is never enough justice for anyone who lost a loved one in a brutal way such as gun violence. Especially in a secluded area like a hallway. And it wasn't even in his own hallway but someone else's hallway. With no one to intervene or tell the truth I have to walk around everyday with this pain that just won't go away. I get anxiety just talking about Keon and I almost feel like my heart is going to stop. I suffer from PTSD, and major depression. I sometimes don't eat. I can't think straight and more times than not I have to drive up and down the street that claimed Keons life. But I guess I'll consider myself the lucky one because I chose to fight. I was given a fight that will never stop. I chose to fight for me and all the other parents who lost their loved ones to gun violence. I chose to fight for the parents who couldn't handle waking up in the morning and dealing with the pain of losing a child. And committed suicide. I chose to fight for the parents who's lost their voices. I am here today to ask that we make a law (keonslaw) mandating that landlords in high crime areas have cameras inside their hallways. So that there would be no more Keons. So that moms and dads everywhere can have some peace at night when they rest their heads knowing that if they lost a loved one in a hallway anywhere in the community their would be some proof of what happened due to security systems being put inside of high crime area hallways. Also so that some of these murders are solved. I can't do it alone and I need your support. This is very special to me because not only did I lose my son. But I lost my nephew in the same manner. The only difference we're that his murder was captured on camera. In two years I planned two funerals and two obituaries. I have been

**strong this far for my whole family. I have to deal with my other sons asking me when is keko coming home. I explained to them that he's not coming home. And then I walk to the urn on my dresser. And say he's in here. The follow up question is why is he in a box mama. Doesn't he want to come out? Does he have legs to walk. A piece of me always ends up breaking slowly. I would never be whole again but I want to be at peace. Sometimes we think that this can't happen to us. But I am here to tell you that yes it can happen to you. This isn't a them thing but instead it's an us thing. Let's work together on making a difference. Thank you so much**

Yolanda Ortiz