To the Toronto Police Service:

I demand a response to this letter. As a friend of Skanda Navaratnam, I do not feel like the Toronto Police adequately serves Toronto’s minority communities. The Bruce McArthur murders took nearly a decade to be solved, clearly because gay people of colour are not valued enough within your organization. Skanda was my childhood babysitter; an incredibly patient, smart, and endlessly kind man. I will never accept that you failed to do justice for him, and men like him, for years on end.

Almost no effort has been made by TPS in the wake of this tragedy. Paul Gauthier, the officer who released McArthur despite hearing a testimony of strangling, has not adequately made up for his severe neglect. He was found guilty of “insubordination”, but there was no real sentence given, no concrete consequences to his actions. The TPS didn’t even issue an apology for their unacceptable mistakes. This is a continual disgrace and it shatters my trust with the TPS.

As of 2018, you have created a dedicated Missing Persons Unit, claiming this will solve the problem. In my experience, this reform measure is useless.

Skanda was a gay Sri Lankan refugee, struggling to find a support network and stability in a new country. He went missing, he was murdered, and justice failed to be served for nearly a decade. Another similar case occurred in my life in November 2018: my ex Harish Pillai went missing. Harish is a Malaysian immigrant, also with little to no support network in Canada. He is a victim of abuse and he suffers from many mental health issues, including severe paranoia. His case was never resolved either.

Harish is another South Asian missing-person’s case deemed as a low priority by the TPS, likely due to being a double-minority. When Harish went missing, an alert was issued but no real investigation was made. Police never found him. The thing is, I happen to know that he is alive. He still posts on Twitter. Clearly, police made no real effort to determine what happened to him. Some of his friends in Malaysia [still assume he is dead](https://www.websleuths.com/forums/threads/harish-pillai-34-toronto-28-november-2018.422322/). Yet again, TPS is failing at the basics of its service.

If Harish had been murdered, I am certain that the TPS would have let his case remain neglected like Skanda’s. If TPS had bothered to find Harish, I doubt they would have treated him decently. This summer alone, TPS needlessly killed D’Andre Campbell and Ejaz Choudry, who were both men of colour with mental health issues like Harish. I have not seen any real remorse or repercussions. I would never trust TPS to return Harish home safely.

TPS needs to be more transparent, responsive, and accountable. I am sick of seeing the TPS treating the men of colour I know as expendable. Actions need to have consequences, and you need to actively make effort to uplift the communities you have repeatedly abused. Meaningful change does not happen by throwing more money at the officers that have failed us. I already watched you do that with your missing persons department, and it has achieved nothing.

Real change will happen when you divert the money from cycling through the same broken system, and reinvest it into repaying those who you have disenfranchised. Reallocating even a small fraction of your $1.2 billion towards BIPOC, LGBT, immigrant, mental health, disability, and homeless initiatives would make a massive difference.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, so a few hundred dollars of preventing hardship is more valuable than several thousand dollars put towards policing an issue that has snowballed over time. Also at this point, providing amends to the vulnerable communities you’ve harmed is a basic moral minimum. I have literally watched you systemically oppress the minorities I know on an ongoing basis. You need to show genuine remorse and actively make up for the years of pain you’ve caused.

Sincerely,

Julianna