

Ray Grogan is the Marion County prosecuting attorney. He formerly taught at the Ohio Northern University College of Law.

I'm a prosecutor, which mean I don't like crime. Or criminals. But I do more than just enforce the law; I'm also a "[minister of justice](#)."

Which means — before I bring a charge — I have an ethical obligation to ensure that there's sufficient evidence to unanimously convince a jury, beyond a reasonable doubt, of a defendant's guilt. In the [recent indictment of a Blendon Township police officer](#) who shot a woman [who was in the process of running him over](#), there's good cause to believe that this ethical obligation was not given full consideration.

All publicly available evidence suggests that a young woman, Ta'Kiya Young, was behind the wheel of her car in a parking lot.

Security officials in a nearby store alerted police that this woman was fleeing after stealing several bottles of liquor. Officers who were assisting an elderly woman in the parking lot with an unrelated issue gave multiple commands for Young to get out of the car so they could investigate the theft.

She defiantly refused.

When Blendon Twp. police officer Connor Grubb stepped in front of her vehicle to keep her from leaving, she put her car into gear and drove the car forward, colliding with Grubb, at which point he fired a single shot.

[Next to the bag full of liquor bottles she'd stolen](#), the officers immediately applied a trauma kit and called for emergency services, but to no avail. She and her unborn child died.

No one disputes this is a tragic incident. The loss of Ms. Young's life and her innocent child's life is heartbreaking. It stirs emotions just thinking about it.

Ray Grogan:[There'd be no justice in retrying Jason Meade. This lust for vengeance is indefensible.](#)

Emotions cannot dictate charging decisions

Doing justice by applying the law as written must be the guiding star. The special prosecutors who presented this case to the grand jury are no doubt good lawyers and diligent public officials.

But, given that the clear evidence that this officer was objectively reasonable in his decision to use deadly force to stop the impending threat of being killed or seriously injured, it's difficult to see what the prosecutors intend to accomplish by indicting Grubb.

The result will almost certainly be an acquittal or a hung jury.

I speak from [experience](#).

I've [presented cases](#) to a grand jury involving officer-involved shootings. This involves painstakingly going through every stitch of evidence to ensure the process is fair and as transparent as possible. In this matter, that would include focusing on why Grubb was in the parking lot in the first place.

He was duty-bound to investigate the theft allegation.



That's what he swore an oath to do — to uphold the law. He could not allow Ms. Young to flee without investigating the matter. More importantly — he has no legal obligation to wait and wonder whether Young would only depress her accelerator a quarter of an inch down and just hurt him or floor it and flatten him.

[Ohio law](#) classifies a car as a deadly weapon. And cars are often wielded as assault weapons with a steering wheel.

[Just last June, a police officers from Milton, Washington](#), was seeking to detain a suspect in a parking lot when he was run over and killed. These potentially deadly threats are [much more common than most](#) people think.

This action by the special prosecutors will cause even more damage to police recruiting in [an already shrinking applicant pool](#). The downstream effects of second-guessing police officers mean fewer applicants and, as a result, mean less talent to draw from. Police officers should be the finest of our community.

The tendency to bring criminal charges against officers who acted in a split second to save their own life gets noticed by the rank and file. The choice for many of them comes down to this — stick around and see if those who are at the beck and call of the anti-police crowd will try to send them to prison for making a tough call or quit the profession and seek a safer job.

Let's speak honestly with each other — this indictment will push our smartest, most prudent people away from policing and into other fields.

Police shootings often inflame the community — typically with the practiced passion of plaintiff’s attorneys who hope to collect a third or more of any settlement — but the law calls for a more thoughtful approach.



When our law enforcement officers put themselves in danger to protect the community and follow protocol, we should support them. We shouldn’t indict them because of political pressure or a tragic situation.

We should double down on upholding the law and protecting justice. Now, we must hope this case doesn’t produce another tragedy — a tragedy of justice for Grubb.

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