



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

4/18/23

Contact: Taylr Ucker-Lauderman  
Chief Officer of Communications & Engagement  
Phone: (216) 317-2339  
Email: [tucker-lauderman@oaesv.org](mailto:tucker-lauderman@oaesv.org)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/oaesv/>  
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/OhioAllianceESV>  
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/oaesv/>

**Statewide Coalition Says Acquittal of Officers Responsible for Jayland Walker Death  
Blocks Progress on Ending Sexual Violence in Ohio**

Yesterday, it was announced that an Ohio grand jury decided not to indict the eight Akron police officers who fatally shot 25-year-old Jayland Walker last year. Jayland Walker, a beloved Black man and community member, was killed by police during a traffic stop in June.

As Ohio's federally recognized anti-sexual violence coalition, we would like to remind community members that all violence is connected. Any time someone is killed or harmed, we must recognize that in most situations, violence is connected to structural inequality and oppression.

Systemic racism and the violence, including state and police violence, that stems from it are rooted in the same types of oppression that fuels sexual violence. We can't expect to end sexual violence while these other forms of violence continue to exist. They all feed into each other.

We demand a safer Ohio for all of our community members.

We are concerned, appalled, and saddened at the death of Jayland Walker and that, in the aftermath, nobody will be held accountable. His death is another police-involved killing added to a long list for our state. This list is filled with Black community members, a fact that speaks to the systemic issues that are harming Black and people of color in Ohio.

Due to the interconnectedness of violence, this lack of accountability will inevitably hinder our ability to truly support survivors of sexual violence in our state and to move towards ending sexual violence as well. We ask you to imagine, invest, and fund community violence prevention work in transformative ways outside of law enforcement and the criminal legal system.

We invite interested community members to research and follow local organizers in their calls for accountability and support for the Walker family.

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*Interviews available upon request.*

*As Ohio's statewide coalition, OAESV uses an anti-oppression lens to advocate for comprehensive responses and rape crisis services for survivors and to empower communities to prevent sexual violence.*