

Monday, December 22, 2014

The Honorable Nikki R. Haley
Office of the Governor
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Anna Bruder
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Dear Governor Haley:

My name is Anna Bruder and I am from Pickens County, South Carolina. My almost four month old son passed away unexpectedly during naptime on October 10, 2014. He was always healthy according to doctor visits and had received all of his shots. Now almost three months later, I still have no cause of death or any idea when to expect the information. I would like to share with you the experience I am enduring in this most difficult time.

Brad Holtzclaw at Liberty Mortuary was in charge of the funeral for my son, Austin Bruder, and he has been very kind. I contacted him a month or so after the funeral and asked if he had an update on the death certificate or cause of death. He did not so he called Kandy Kelley, the coroner, for me as I had called but never received response back. He was told there was no update but that she said it would be soon. Also, I was meeting with Pam, at The Parenting Place of Easley, regarding counseling for my family because of my son's death around this time. I spoke with her about Austin and she was shocked I hadn't heard anything. She also called Kandy and left a voicemail and never received a response.

Wednesday December 17, 2014 I called the coroner office again and the woman who answered (Sheryl) had an attitude and said that Kandy called before that and that she knew because she was with her. I told her that was not the case and she continued to be uncooperative. Kandy called me a couple of hours later and I asked her if there were any updates and she was very impolite and short. She could not tell me how much longer or if she had found out anything since my son's death. The conversation upset me so badly that I broke down crying in the middle of a store.

After that conversation, later during the day I looked up and called the former coroner, Dr. Mahanes. He returned my call the next day and I told him my situation. He apologized and said he did not see why it would take so long or why they would be so rude to me. Kandy Kelley is a county elected official and everyone at the local levels of government have either been unhelpful or did not know how to get any answers. My husband, John Bruder, had contacted your office last week and was told to write a letter to you as there might be some assistance you could provide our family in this time of hardship and sorrow.

I hope this letter reaches you soon because I so desperately want some answers. This has been enormously tough on my family, and if I can't have a known cause yet, it would be amazing to have at least an idea of how much longer I have to wait to know what happened to my baby boy.

Thank you so much for your time, Governor Haley.

Anna Bruder