

SCYM Minute For a Ban on No-Knock Warrants

The Quakers of South Central Yearly Meeting (SCYM) acknowledge a sad truth – people die as the result of specific police training and tactics. Historically, it is also true there is little to no accountability when law enforcement officers take lives. Breonna Taylor was the victim of a no-knock warrant assault. To honor her memory, Friends call attention to the urgent need for significant reforms.

SCYM supports legislation to ban no knock warrants at federal, state, and local levels. Further, Friends support a requirement that all warrants be served by identifiable uniformed officers wearing active body cameras. Ending no-knock warrants at all levels of law enforcement is an aspect of equal protection under the law.

Nationwide, no-knock warrants are issued by judges, in many cases without due questioning. No-knock warrants authorize a militarized storming of people's homes by SWAT teams or squads of plain clothes police officers. These raids often happen in the middle of the night, without warning, which can elicit a natural fight or flight response. Studies have shown that no-knock warrants disproportionately target marginalized communities.

South Central Yearly Meeting condemns a legal system that is racist and unjust. As a result of Breonna Taylor's death, the only charges filed were against one of the officers involved and were based on the reckless endangerment of her neighbors by shots fired, not because law enforcement officers shot Breonna to death as she slept. SCYM recognizes the righteous outrage at this injustice. Equality includes accountability.

We hold in the Light Breonna Taylor's family and all the families and communities who have lost someone to systemic failures. We lift up our prayers and voices to work toward a societal transformation that upholds our testimonies of equality, community, and peace.