**To: Transportation Policy and Finance**

**From: Late email from Sandy & Hilary Melville's daughter regarding HF112 (Norton)**

I'm sitting here to try and write up what losing my brother has done to me and how it has changed my life. But how am I supposed to put that in words? How am I supposed to put those feelings on a single sheet of paper? I can't. Not only is it impossible to explain and verbalize, I don't want to even think about it. It takes all my strength every day to NOT think about how horrible it is that he is not here. How horrible it is going through every day of my life pretending nothing is wrong, when something always is. How gut-wrenching it is to return home to see my mom and dad on holidays and weekend visits, for what should be a joyous time, and have that empty chair at the dinner table, that empty bedroom down the hall and that excruciating, inevitable empty feeling in my heart.

How am I supposed to go on enjoying the things in my life that a normal 25 year old should be enjoying when I have this hole that will never cease to exist? I have a good job, a nice home, a loving boyfriend- who will likely be marrying me within a year or two- all these things to be excited for, and yet every happening, every day has this dark shadow looming. It's inescapable- a constant reminder of what my life and family once was, and how it was stripped from me in an instant. Every happy moment is accompanied with guilt for knowing he never got the chances I have, never got to experience a full life that I am getting. A sad moment becomes an endless spiral into a deep depression, replaying all the horrible memories from that night and the days to follow. A moment of anger becomes an eternal question of why me? why him? why my family? It's not fair.

It's not fair that someone else made a horrible, irresponsible, life altering decision and we are the ones suffering the permanent consequences. It's not fair that every time I see a happy family or hear siblings reminisce I am forced to face the fact that it will never be my family again. It's not fair to my parents to have their only son taken from them, forcing them to grow older without watching him grow up. It's not fair to Austin to cut his life short; depriving him of a promising career, a wife, children, seeing the world, achieving his dreams, living.

My brother, my big brother, my only brother lost his life because of someone else's irreversible, ignorant, idiotic decision to get behind the wheel after drinking. It doesn't matter if it was his first time or his last time doing so- the consequences are still the same, and I am still without my brother. This criminal may have received a few years in prison, but what everyone fails to realize is we, my brother and my family, were sentenced to life.