



**OFFICE OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL
DISTRICT ATTORNEY OF COLORADO
District Attorney Alexis King**

July 15, 2026

Colonel Packard
Colorado State Patrol
400 Kipling St.
Lakewood, CO 80215

Re: *Officer Involved Shooting, September 11, 2025*

The First Judicial District Critical Incident Response Team has completed its investigation into the shooting at Tyler Young by Colorado State Patrol's Trooper Herrera on September 11, 2025, at 5:39 pm, at 952 Swede Gulch Road in Evergreen. The events culminated when Trooper Herrera crashed into Mr. Young east of Genesee in Colorado. No one suffered serious bodily injury as a result of the crash. CIRT Commander Melanie Thornton of the Arvada Police Department presented the investigation to my office on November 11, 2025. Mr. Young resolved his corresponding criminal case and was sentenced on April 27, 2026.

After a thorough review and analysis of the evidence, I find that Trooper Herrera's choice to use deadly physical force was legally justified to defend himself and others from the threat posed by Mr. Young in the parking lot. Given my conclusion, no criminal charges will be filed against Trooper Herrera (the "Trooper"). I am issuing this letter to you pursuant to §20-1-114(1), C.R.S.

The First Judicial District Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) investigates any incident in which a law enforcement officer within the First Judicial District uses deadly force, or attempts to use deadly force, against a person while acting under the color of official law enforcement duties. The CIRT team is comprised of highly trained and skilled investigators working under my authority and appointed from multiple law enforcement agencies, including my office. This multi-jurisdictional team of objective, dispassionate professionals protect the integrity of the investigation by exercising independent judgment in conducting a thorough investigation. To maintain transparency and reduce conflicts of interest, officers from the involved agency do not perform critical duties related to the investigation.

Here, the Colorado State Patrol ("CSP") activated the CIRT team to investigate the use of deadly force by the Trooper. Consistent with CIRT policy, CSP did not participate in the substantive portions of the CIRT investigation. The CIRT team promptly responded to investigate, led by Commander Thornton. Under her direction, the CIRT team processed the scene, completed interviews with those who saw or heard the events, and preserved necessary evidence. The Trooper involved provided voluntary statements and submitted to questioning. These interviews were recorded, reviewed as part of the investigation, and included within the file. Commander Thornton briefed me, my leadership team, and CIRT team members on this investigation and provided the file for my review.



My team reviewed over 1,546 photographs and approximately 478 pages of reports, 204 body worn cameras, and 25 recorded interviews by the Arvada Police Department, Clear Creek County Sheriff's Office, Colorado State Patrol, Golden Police Department, Silverthorne Police Department, Wheat Ridge Police Department, Lakewood Police Department, and other CIRT agencies throughout the First Judicial District. I reviewed the recorded interviews of the officers and witnesses who heard or saw the events and the evidence collected from the scene and evaluated by independent examiners.

As District Attorney, my role is to determine whether the Trooper committed a criminal offense. No charges may be legally or ethically brought unless a crime can be proven beyond a reasonable doubt, a standard that applies to officers and civilians alike. Because this shooting was justified under Colorado law, no criminal charges can or should be filed against the Trooper given his concerns for the safety of himself and others.

A person may be held criminally liable under Colorado law only when the evidence proves beyond a reasonable doubt that they committed every element of an offense defined by Colorado statute. When a person intentionally attempts to shoot at another person, they commit the crime of attempted murder, unless a legally recognized justification exists. If a justification exists, the shooter is not criminally liable. Generally, acting in self-defense or defense of others is one such justification. These defenses are available to all Coloradans, including a trooper. A peace officer is also specifically authorized to use deadly physical force under certain circumstances.

As relevant here, a peace officer is justified in using deadly force if: 1) the officer has objectively reasonable grounds to believe that the officer or another person is in imminent danger of being killed or suffering serious bodily injury; 2) the officer does in fact believe that the officer or another person is in imminent danger of being killed or suffering serious bodily injury; and 3) the officer has an objectively reasonable belief that a lesser degree of force is inadequate. § 18-1-707(4.5), C.R.S. Acting in self-defense or defense of others is subject to the same analysis. § 18-1-704(1)-(2), C.R.S. By law, in deciding whether the Trooper was justified in acting in self-defense or defense of others, it does not matter whether Mr. Young was actually trying to injure the Trooper or another person, so long as a reasonable person, under like conditions and circumstances, would believe that it appeared that deadly physical force was necessary to prevent imminent harm. The facts must be viewed as they appeared to the Trooper at the time; future developments are irrelevant to the legal analysis.

Therefore, I must determine whether, at the time the Trooper shot at Mr. Young, he had objectively reasonable grounds to believe, and did in fact believe, that he or another person was in imminent danger of being killed or suffering great bodily injury, and whether he reasonably believed a lesser degree of force was inadequate. In other words, would a reasonable person, confronted with the same facts and circumstances, believe that it was necessary to use deadly physical force to defend himself or others from Mr. Young? If so, the shooting is justified under Colorado law, and no criminal charges can or should be filed based on that decision.

Facts Established by the Investigation

On September 11, 2025, at approximately 4:23 pm, Silverthorne Police were dispatched to a report of a vehicle stolen at the Silverthorne Recreation Center in Summit County. The victim reported that he had parked and was inside the Rec Center for about 30 minutes. The victim's personal belongings, including truck keys, were located inside the men's locker room in an unlocked locker. When the victim returned to the parking lot, his work truck was gone. The truck was described as a white Ford F150 with a topper and company logos on the sides. It was further reported that there was a radioactive density gauge in the back of the truck that could pose a hazardous material situation. Upon review of surveillance footage, two males were seen entering the recreation center, going into the men's locker room, and returning with a backpack

belonging to the victim. At approximately 3:45 p.m., the males left in two separate vehicles, taking the victim's F150.

The victim was able to provide live tracking updates regarding the location of the F150. Around 4:58 p.m., GPS showed the F150 was at a Maverik gas station in Idaho Springs in Clear Creek County. The Idaho Springs Police Department was notified, however; they were unable to locate the F150. The F150 headed eastbound on Interstate 70, and the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office and Colorado State Patrol were notified of the stolen vehicle, its GPS location, and of the hazardous radiation concerns.

According to GPS, the F150 became stationary at Walmart in Evergreen at approximately 5:11 p.m. where it was subsequently found parked and unattended. While the F150 was parked, officers from Clear Creek County Sheriff's Office (the "CCCSO"), Jefferson County Sheriff's Office (the "JCSO"), and CSP began discussing plans to contact the suspect and the F150. Officers tried to procure a Grappler, a law enforcement tool designed to safely end vehicle pursuits by deploying a net or strap from the police vehicle around the rear wheel of the fleeing vehicle gradually decelerating it in a controlled manner, however, none were available. Law enforcement continued to discuss how to approach the suspect and the F150 while noting concerns about the potentially hazardous material inside the vehicle.



Aerial of location in the Walmart parking lot where police attempted to stop Mr. Young



Damage to the truck from the collision



Damage to the CCCSO vehicle from the collision



Image from Trooper Herrera's body worn camera



Image from Trooper Herrera's body worn camera



Damage to Trooper Herrera's vehicle from the collision



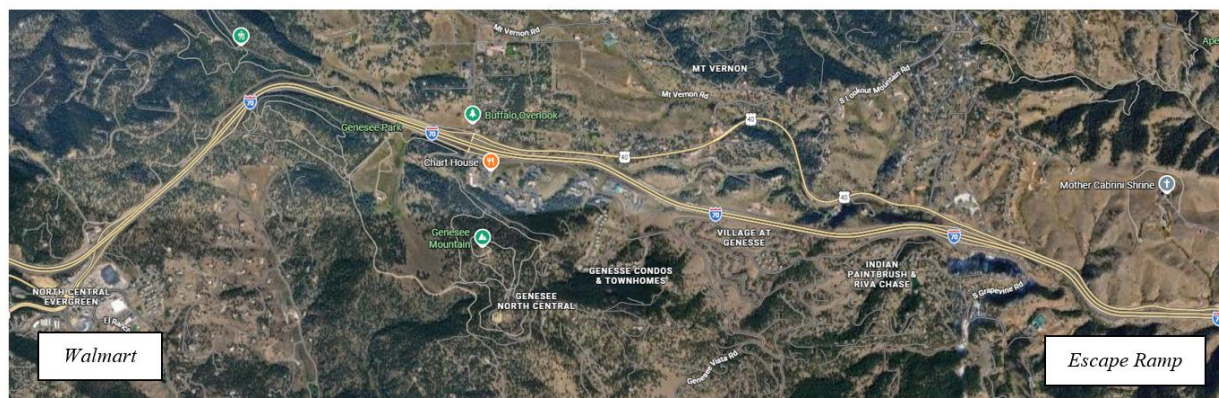
Damage to Trooper Herrera's vehicle from the collision

At approximately 5:38 p.m., while officers were discussing whether to make contact prior to the vehicle becoming mobile, the driver, later identified as Mr. Young, returned to the F150 and headed out of the parking lot. Trooper Herrera, in a marked police Dodge Charger, attempted to sweep around to the rear of the F150, but failed to account for the raised median separating the parking lot rows. Trooper Herrera was unable to enter the row Mr. Young was driving through. Trooper Herrera stopped his vehicle with emergency equipment activated at the end of the next row over and began exiting his vehicle with his patrol rifle. Trooper Herrera considered this a high risk stop, requiring him to draw a firearm, because of the potential Mr. Young had a firearm, though there was no information to indicate Mr. Young was armed. Given Trooper Herrera's concerns, he preferred his rifle to his handgun. As he was getting out of his patrol car, CCCSO Deputies, in two marked police Chevy Tahoes with activated emergency equipment, drove head on toward Mr. Young while JCSO Deputies in marked police vehicles

with activated emergency equipment approached from the rear while the F150 continued out of the parking row.

Mr. Young accelerated, ramming the front of one of the marked police CCCSO Chevy Tahoes at possibly 20 to 30 miles per hour. The collision rotated the Tahoe approximately 45 degrees. Mr. Young backed up and then accelerated forward again, passing the passenger side of the Tahoe. Mr. Young proceeded at about 15 to 20 miles per hour toward Trooper Herrera, over the raised median, knocking down a stop sign, and striking the driver's side of Trooper Herrera's vehicle while Trooper Herrera was trying to get out of the driver's side door. As Trooper Herrera's vehicle was struck, he tried to shoot at Mr. Young with his patrol rifle; however, a round was not chambered. Trooper Herrera charged his rifle and fired ten rounds in about four seconds at the F150 after it passed him. When Trooper Herrera shot, he believed Mr. Young could hit the other CCCSO Deputy that he assumed was right behind Mr. Young though CCCSO was no longer in the forward pathway of the F150. Mr. Young drove away from the police and onto the main road.

Despite severe damage to Trooper Herrera's passenger side door, which would not close, Trooper Herrera pursued Mr. Young eastbound on I-70. Various law enforcement officers engaged in the pursuit as well. As Trooper Herrera followed Mr. Young down I-70 and passed the Genesee exit, Trooper Herrera became the lead law enforcement vehicle traveling over 100 miles per hour in moderate traffic. Trooper Herrera decided to utilize the eastbound Interstate 70 Mount Vernon emergency escape ramp for runaway trucks located at mile post 257 in Jefferson County as an area to crash into the hobbled and damaged F150 and perform a tactical vehicle intervention (TVI). Upon contact from Trooper Herrera, the F150, was forced onto the emergency escape ramp. At the time, other officers estimated Trooper Herrera and the F150 to be traveling approximately 80 to 85 mph.



The Scene

The Jefferson County Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) coordinated the preservation and analysis of physical evidence, analyzed body worn camera footage and obtained statements from all witnesses who saw or heard parts of the event. The CIRT utilized digital documentation to memorialize the scene.

Trooper Herrera was relieved of his patrol rifle, and it was photographed and processed. During the ammunition count it was determined that Trooper Herrera fired ten rounds. During the search of the scene, ten 5.56 mm shell casings matching the ammunition issued to Trooper Herrera were recovered. Trooper Herrera's body worn camera and dashboard camera video were collected and downloaded.

The stolen F150 was inspected, and the following bullet defects were documented:

- A. Bullet defect on the driver's side truck tailgate, in the plastic where the bed topper meets the top of the tailgate door
- B. Bullet defect on the driver's side rear truck bed topper pillar
- C. Bullet defect on the driver's side rear bed of the truck, in the metal just above the rear driver's side taillight
- D. Bullet defect on the driver's side of the truck bed topper, near where it meets the back of the truck cabin
- E. Bullet defect on the rear driver's side door metal, near the base of the door
- F. Bullet defect on the rear driver's side door metal
- G. Bullet defect on the driver's side C-pillar of the cabin of the truck, at the base of the pillar
- H. Bullet defect on the front driver's door B-pillar, next to the window



Additionally, the following fired bullet and fired bullet fragments were located:

- Fired bullet, recovered from the front passenger floorboard of the F-150
- Fired bullet lead fragment, recovered from the front driver's door exterior metal of the b-pillar, next to bullet defect H
- Fired bullet copper fragment, recovered from the front driver's door exterior metal of the b-pillar, next to bullet defect H
- Fired bullet fragment, recovered from the plastic within the internal compartment of the rear driver's side door
- Fired bullet fragments, recovered from inside the front driver's door interior black rubber door seal
- Copper fired bullet fragment, recovered from the rear driver's door interior shelf

Analysis

When Trooper Herrera attempted to contact Mr. Young, he knew Mr. Young was in a stolen F150 containing a radioactive testing machine that could pose a hazardous materials risk. Law enforcement was unable to procure a Grappler which would have provided another tool to them as they came into contact with the F150. Trooper Herrera was also aware that the F150 could be tracked by GPS and its location was known to the victim and law enforcement. When Trooper Herrera and law enforcement partners tried to contact Mr. Young, Mr. Young struck two marked police vehicles and caused injury to Trooper Herrera. In response to Mr. Young's actions, Trooper Herrera fired 10 rounds from his patrol rifle at Mr. Young as he drove away, potentially hitting the truck eight times.

Despite the vagaries of law enforcement's plan to contact Mr. Young in the Walmart parking lot, at the moment the Trooper shot at Mr. Young, he had just watched the F150 deliberately crash into fully marked law enforcement vehicles before driving into his own vehicle, causing the door to close on him, and the F150 drive away from the law enforcement presence. Given Mr. Young's actions in the parking lot, I find that

Trooper Herrera had objectively reasonable grounds to believe, and did in fact believe, that he or another person was in imminent danger of being killed or suffering great bodily injury, and no degree of lesser force against an F150 would ameliorate the danger presented by Mr. Yong in that moment. A reasonable person, with the same facts and circumstances, would believe that it was necessary to use deadly force to protect themselves or others. Therefore, no criminal charges can or should be filed.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Alexis D. King", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Alexis D. King
District Attorney
First Judicial District
Colorado