



Ohio Attorney General's Office
Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Investigative Report



2022-0535
Officer Involved Critical Incident – I-71 N. Mile Marker 123, Lewis
Center, Ohio (L)

Investigative Activity: Telephone Interview
Involves: Robert Joseph Basista (W)
Date of Activity: 03/25/2022
Author: SA Todd Fortner, #93

Narrative:

On March 25, 2022, BCI Special Agent Todd Fortner (SA Fortner), while reviewing 911 recordings, identified a possible witness to the Officer Involved Critical incident that occurred on I-71 northbound at mile marker 123 on March 11, 2022. Robert Joseph (RJ) Basista (Basista) called 911 on the 11th and advised he witnessed the incident. SA Fortner contacted Basista by phone at 1530 hours. This interview was audio recorded and a copy of the recording was saved electronically within the case file. Please refer to the recording for specific quotes. The following is a summation of the interview.

Basista advised he was working that day in a Freightliner box truck and was southbound on I-71. He said he noticed traffic was slow and there was no northbound traffic. Basista said he assumed there was an accident. He then saw a subject walking northbound in the northbound lanes. He said he then noticed police officers and vehicles following the subject with guns drawn. Basista said the subject continued walking, then jogging, northbound when he saw the subject reach for his waistband. Basista said he saw the subject pull a black "Glock style" handgun. He said he saw and heard the subject fire at least three shots southbound in the direction of the officers and civilian traffic. He said the police then returned fire.

Basista said he looked away, but when he looked back the shooting was still going on. He said the subject was still running northbound and he then heard a shot that was noticeably louder than the other shots. He said the man then fell to the ground. He wasn't sure if the man still had the gun when he went down, but he knows he had it when he was running. Basista described the man as wearing all black with some bright neon colors on the front of his chest and he had braids.

The interview was concluded at 1554 hours.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: RJ Basista 3-25-22

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