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As an African American student at Harvard University, I have never felt safe here. I have never felt safe expressing my mental health concerns for myself or my peers. I have never felt that the university would have my back and be willing to support and defend me if harm ever came my way. Even with the lack of gun violence within this Cambridge bubble — compared to my Atlanta environment, where it was inevitable — I have never felt that I would be safe or protected here.

I find it wild that Harvard prides itself on diversity but not on the accommodation of diverse experiences. I did not lie in my application about how traumatizing my environment and childhood were, nor about the lack of opportunities and resources available to my peers and me. When you pull students from backgrounds such as mine, you have to realize that emotional and academic support are just the start of the nurturing needed for me to thrive at a PWI. Harvard has failed in this regard.

I have watched my black peers be cornered into taking Leave of Absence because of Harvard's inability to provide the resources they know my community needs urgently — that every student should be provided urgently. They see black and brown students as a liability for their mental well-being and have forced victims to leave this campus for things out of their control. I have visited McLean Hospital and, from what I saw, the students from Harvard dispatched to the mental institution were only black and brown students. Last semester, we lost 3 students from this institution to suicide. Each time, Harvard would send the same email to students, demonstrating a blatant disregard for their lives that were lost.

They will try to tell you that this is standard procedure for students that they think are unwell. However, they do not protect us from what causes us to feel this way. Harvard is the wealthiest institution in the world but has been unable to provide the resources we so desperately need here. For those unaware, Harvard has a 2-month wait time for their CAMHS consultations, which may or may not result in you finding a therapist. They tell you to try talking to your peers through peer counseling groups or designate us to use TimelyCare, but these are not enough, nor are they sufficient ways to handle a mental health crisis on campus.

Let me be clear when I say this: The swatting attack was not just a safety issue, nor will mental health resources be the clear way to solve it. It is a racial issue that stems from white supremacy and the history of black students, such as myself being unprotected and placed at a disadvantage repeatedly. I am tired of the business-as-usual rhetoric that this campus and institution encompasses. I am tired of our black community feeding into that rhetoric when things like this happen to us. This attack has retraumatized my peers and me through our personal experiences of gun violence and swatting. I believe that empathy and urgency from this

institution are needed. Accountability is needed. We should not wait for another life to be lost due to the lack of what this institution has provided, even when they have the wealth and power. We should also not have to wake up daily and continue class knowing the lives we could have lost within our community.