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Link to youtube video of speech to family members and their short responses:  
<https://youtu.be/wJfS9-iglzY>

**Speech:**

I have grown up in a time where students, kids my age, are confident enough in themselves to stand in what they believe in. I have made it my priority to do just that. Participating in the March For Our Lives Movement, the school walkout, the Climate Strike, and everyday conversations around change, I have experienced first hand the rush of change can bring a person. I live in a privileged section of Indiana where we see green space on every block and forests on a twenty minute drive, have clean water, no matter what, and can rely on our city government to make initiatives on green energy and waste reduction. I have been privileged to experience growing up in a place that allows young people to share their views, ideas, and concerns on topics we care about. But I am the privileged class.

There are people in my state that do not have access to clean water. People of predominantly african american and latino communities that feel the health impacts of coal plants in their towns, asthma, lung disease, and heart conditions that affect every aspect of their life. The people that climate change is truly affecting right now do not have a voice. They do not have a place to share their stories. I was invited to our local School Board meeting to speak on the topic of waste misuse. Invited. In the places these environmental injustices are occurring they are just that, injustices. They are not heard or addressed. They are not invited to meetings where they share their ideas, their stories, their grievances. People are dying. It is an easy statement to say, regardless of the weight behind it. Animals are dying, kids are dying, people are dying. It doesn't seem to make an impact with the people that really need to listen. But it should. Those are who all of these speeches are meant for, aren't they? The leaders that can make real change? You? You have... yet you haven't. We plead and we plead and we plead, and yet? The people who need it the most do not see a change. We need to listen to the people who know the subject well, the indigenous communities that have relied on a sustained earth for centuries with little footprint on the environment. The children of the world that starve in a drought that we never feel the impacts of. We need to hear the stories that we do not experience because we need to understand other people's pain. Where I live we have been saying we have been in a drought for months, and before that we said we wouldn't have a summer because it rained so many days in a row. The truth is, we don't see anything. If you live in a city in the United States, you see a small sliver of this issue, some of you more than others depending on where you live, the color of your skin, or your gender, but considerably less than the high impact areas. We need to listen to the worst to solve what injustices there are. We need to hear and see and experience the true desperation climate change brings. Only then will we know how to fix this massive issue. The people being hurt by this issue know what they need. They need the people in power to listen.

We need to stop showing pictures of New Orleans flooded streets, of rising Florida marshes, of East Coast snow piles. That is nothing. Nothing compared to the droughts of southern Asia, the starvation of people that have no crops to live off of, no water to drink. I complained to many times this summer that I was thirsty. My thirst is nothing compared to the thirst of thousands that wait in lines for single cups of water. Our experience is of course, not nothing in the long run, they add up to a history of climate change that we need to keep a record of. But we need to be listening to others. This cannot be a selfish issue. We cannot only care when our cities go underwater, when our people begin moving inland, when our water runs out, or when our economy fails as a result of climate change. Because somewhere else in the world, these things have already happened. We simply cannot start to care about one another too late. And it is already too late for some.