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HOUSE CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE TESTIMONY ON HB 381  
FEBRUARY 26, 2020

Chair Lang, Vice-Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee. My name is Doug Deeken and I am a volunteer coordinator with Ohioans for Concealed Carry. I wish to testify in favor of HB 381.

OFCC seeks the change to self-defense law that HB 381 addresses.

The “duty to retreat” is an archaic requirement in self-defense situations. It does not consider the reality that most self-defense encounters take place very quickly and that forcing the victim of a crime to first attempt to retreat can put them at a very serious disadvantage to surviving the violent encounter. Indeed, statistics show that those victims of violent crime who actively resist are more likely to emerge alive and with less serious injury than those who do not. Current law puts the victim of violent crime at a serious disadvantage while removing the duty to retreat would help to protect the innocent.

The current status of “Stand your ground” laws also shows that Ohio is both behind the times and in the minority. A majority of states either have “Stand your ground” as either statutory or case law, including EVERY STATE that borders Ohio. If “Stand your ground” produced the undesirable results that opponents of it claim then we would see plentiful examples of it. The simple fact of the matter is that “Stand your ground” laws do not lead to the hackneyed results of “Blood in the streets” that opponents predict. We have heard those same claims with every proposed improvement to firearms and self-defense law over the decades and none of them have come to fruition. This will be no different.

Again, Chair Lang and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any written questions you may have.