

TO: House Criminal Justice Committee
FROM: Gary Daniels, Chief Lobbyist, ACLU of Ohio
DATE: June 4, 2020
RE: House Bill 381



To Chairman Lang, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee, thank you for this opportunity to present opponent testimony on House Bill 381.

The ACLU of Ohio opposes HB 381 because of the likely effect expanding Ohio's "Stand Your Ground" law, as found in this legislation, will have on black and brown people throughout the state.

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Indeed, we already know, across the country, people of color are more likely to be stopped, searched, ticketed, arrested, convicted, imprisoned, imprisoned for longer sentences, sentenced to death, and actually executed than their white counterparts. We are concerned HB 381 will lead to more of the same disparate impacts found in our criminal justice system.

When looking at national crime data, we also know of the gigantic racial disparities when it comes to justifiable homicides. That is, when the shooter is white and the victim black, the chances that homicide will be found justified is significantly greater than when both the shooter and victim are white (and when the shooter is black and the victim white or black).

This applies in states that do not have your Stand Your Ground laws and those that do. In fact, this difference is further exacerbated in states *with* Stand Your Ground laws. To give you an idea of the magnitude, a 2013 study by the Urban Institute that examined FBI crime data concluded, in states with Stand Your Ground laws, a white shooter is 350% more likely to have their homicide ruled justified when the victim is black versus when the victim is white.

If the Ohio legislature is intent upon expanding Ohio's Stand Your Ground law via HB 381, at the very least, this bill should be amended to include reporting and data collection requirements so we all may follow the effects of this expansion.

Obviously, statistics on the races of the accused and the victims would be included, among other useful data. Only with reliable data can Ohio examine and determine any further needed fixes or changes should HB 381 become law. What possible reason or justification could there be for not collecting and reporting such data?

Members of this committee, the ACLU of Ohio urges your rejection of House Bill 381.