

Chairman Lang, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the Criminal Justice Committee.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today.

My name is Liz Vivas and I'm a mathematician working at Ohio State University. I am strongly opposed to Stand Your Ground Bill HB 381.

Among my colleagues, we have many different points of view when it comes to politics. I truly value such diversity of opinion, as it speaks of the many liberties that we enjoy in this country. In our field of study however, we also deal with crude facts, and build theories upon them. In this respect, I believe, our field is a little bit like the rule of law.

Experts on Constitutional Law may debate the interpretation of Second Amendment rights, and how this might affect our own personal liberties; this is not my domain. Today I want to tell you about facts. Numbers have no ideology, no intent, no political views, and the numbers I want to discuss are not contested.

In 2005, Florida became the first state to adopt a Stand Your Ground law. The effects of this law have been extensively studied and as such, Florida serves as a cautionary tale of the inherent danger of Stand Your Ground Laws.

The implementation of Florida's Stand Your Ground law was associated with a 32 percent increase in firearm homicide rates and a 24 percent increase in overall homicide rates. In a follow-up study, researchers found a 75 percent increase in justifiable homicide rates and an estimated 22 percent increase in unlawful homicide rates after the passage of Florida's Stand Your Ground law. ¹

We cannot be blind to the effects of this law in Florida, and nationally there is more evidence of the destruction of life that this kind of law allows. At least 30 people nationwide are killed each month as a result of Stand Your Ground laws. Stand Your Ground laws are associated with an increase in firearm injuries, resulting in emergency room visits and hospitalizations. ² No available evidence suggests that broadening self-defense laws are associated with deterring crime.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this harmful and dangerous bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

I will now take any questions you may have.

Notes

1. Humphreys DK, Gasparini A, Wiebe DJ. Evaluating the impact of Florida's "Stand Your Ground" Self-defense law on homicide and suicide by firearm: An interrupted time series study. JAMA Intern Med. 2017; 177(1): 44-50.

Humphreys DK, Gasparini A, Wiebe DJ. Association between enactment of a “Stand Your Ground” self-defense law and unlawful homicides in Florida: An interrupted time series study. *JAMA Intern Med.* 2017; 177(10): 1523-1524.

2. McClellan C, Tekin, E. Stand Your Ground laws, homicides, and injuries. *Journal of Human Resources.* 2017; 52(3): 621-653.

McClellan CB, Tekin E. Stand your ground laws, homicides, and injuries. *National Bureau of Economic Research.* 2012.

Cheng C, Hoekstra M. Does strengthening self-defense law deter crime or escalate violence? Evidence from castle doctrine. *National Bureau of Economic Research.* 2012. See also: Gius M. The relationship between stand-your-ground laws and crime: A state-level analysis. *The Social Science Journal.* 2016; 53(3): 329-338.