

Dear Chairman George Lang,

Thank you for allowing Ohioans to submit written testimony, as I will not be able to be present for in-person testimony. My name is Maria Gulley. I have lived in Ohio in the Cincinnati area for most of my life, and I recently returned permanently to my home state to live near family. I am writing to strongly oppose HB381.

Stand your ground laws (such as the proposed HB381) are associated with an increase in homicide rates (McClellan C, Tekin, E. Stand Your Ground laws, homicides, and injuries. *Journal of Human Resources*. 2017; 52(3): 621-653. <https://www.nber.org/papers/w18187>), and at the same time they do NOT appear to deter crime (Cheng C, Hoekstra M. Does strengthening self-defense law deter crime or escalate violence? Evidence from castle doctrine. National Bureau of Economic Research. 2012. http://www.ncdsv.org/images/TAMU_Does-strengthening-self-defense-laws-deter-crime-or-escalate-violence_2012.pdf). These studies suggest that this bill would not only likely fail to deter crime, it would likely increase it.

Furthermore, statistics in Florida suggest that these laws are enforced in racially charged ways which make black men less likely to be justified in using deadly force than white men (Roman J. Race, justifiable homicide, and Stand Your Ground Laws: Analysis of FBI Supplementary Homicide Report data. Urban Institute. 2013. <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/23856/412873-Race-Justifiable-Homicide-and-Stand-Your-Ground-Laws.PDF>), and also that white men are more likely to be justified in shooting black men than in shooting white men (Ackermann N, Goodman MS, Gilbert K, Arroyo-Johnson C, Pagano M. Race, law, and health: Examination of 'Stand Your Ground' and defendant convictions in Florida. *Social Science & Medicine*. 2015; 142: 194–201 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0277953615300642>). While this may not be the intent of the law, at a time when national attention is being drawn to the frequently unintentional racial disparities in our legal systems, these factors must be taken into consideration. Laws do not exist in a vacuum, and when there is reason to believe that the outcome will reinforce racial inequality in spite of intent, it matters.

As Americans who value life, we should all be seeking to minimize the justified use of deadly force. This bill instead expands it by not requiring people to seek alternate means (such as fleeing or other uses of force) as first lines of defense.

Ohio already has incredibly generous self-defense legislation in place, and I believe that the existing statutes are sufficient to allow Ohioans to safely protect themselves, their homes, and their families.

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

Sincerely,
Maria Gulley