

8 Jun 2020

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

My name is Monica Williams-Mitchell. I have been an educator in Ohio for the last 35 years and counting. I am strongly opposed to HB381, the so-called "Stand Your Ground" bill.

At a time in our history when we are witnessing firsthand the sort of uneven enforcement of existing laws and the injustice of vigilantes targeting innocent black people, it is beyond irresponsible, callous and sickening that a bill like this is under consideration.

So-called "stand your ground" laws do not improve public safety, nor do they enable criminals to be apprehended with any more efficiency. Indeed, a study by the American Bar Association has found that these laws INCREASE homicides, have NO deterrent on serious crimes, and result in RACIAL DISPARITIES within the justice system.

If your actual purpose as a legislative body is to serve the best interests of the people, ALL THE PEOPLE, of the State of Ohio, then you must dismiss this foolhardy bill from consideration. If your actual purpose is to increase racial injustice and tension, increase the number of dead Ohioans, and perpetuate a fraud on the voters, then by all means, proceed. But know that the eyes of the voting public are on you, should you choose to shirk your duty as elected representatives.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on dangerous and unethical bill.

Monica Williams-Mitchell

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