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REJECT OH HB 381: "STAND YOUR GROUND"

In my career as a Feeding and Swallowing Specialist at Akron Children's Hospital, I cared for a number of children who had been shot. It is frankly, a heartbreaking sight. Gun shots cause a massive amount of tissue damage and require on average 9 times more units of blood to treat than other types of injuries. I have treated children whose entire jaw has been shot off and 2 year olds with gaping wounds to the abdomen that require the placement of a tube for feeding. And these are the lucky ones who survive. I'm sorry to be so graphic but this is the reality you would see if you had been able to come into those children's hospital rooms with me. And to face their parents. According to the Brady Center, 21 American children are shot every day. . In Ohio, as in the nation as a whole, more than 60% of the children who die by gunfire, die from Gun Homicide, usually by being caught in crossfire during domestic shootings or criminal acts. And many of the nearly 40,000 adults we kill with guns annually are parents so their children endure a lifetime without their mother or father. So I can truly say that I am for any law that will make Ohioans (particularly women and children) safer.

But HB 381 WILL NOT. During my time at Akron Children's I also was a published medical researcher. I know how to read research. And on this issue, the research is clear. **Stand Your Ground laws increase gun homicides.** I quote to you this finding from The Rand study as explained in the RAND BLOG, Sept. 12, 2019.

- "The RAND review concluded there was "moderate" evidence—the second strongest level of evidence—that **stand your ground laws are associated with an increase in homicides**. Since publication of RAND's report, at least four additional studies meeting RAND's standards of rigor have reinforced the finding that "stand your ground" laws increase homicides. None of them found that "stand your ground" laws prevent violent crime. No rigorous study has yet determined that "stand your ground" laws promote legitimate acts of self-defense.
- Despite the assertions of Stand Your Ground supporters, there are no studies that associate broadening self-defense laws with deterring crime.(10)
- In FL when they passed Stand Your Ground, there was a 45 percent **increase in firearm homicide rates among white residents and a 23 percent increase among Black residents.** (5) Researchers from the National Bureau of Economic Research estimate, based on state level data, that **at least 30 individuals are killed each month in the U.S. as a result of Stand Your Ground laws.** They documented evidence that these laws also are associated with an increase in hospitalizations related to firearm-inflicted injuries (2)
- **Stand Your Ground laws encourage escalated violence in situations that could be defused in other ways.**

In 79 percent of Florida Stand Your Ground cases, the person who claimed Stand Your Ground could have retreated to avoid the confrontation. **In 68% of cases, the person killed in these disputes was unarmed.(6)**

- So the dramatic scene that many people see in their heads of an innocent victim reaching into her purse, whipping out her shiny gun and waving it at her attacker or blowing him away exists mostly in the movies. The reality is that in almost 70% of the Florida cases, the unarmed person was killed. Nearly 60 percent of those Floridians who claimed Stand Your Ground had been arrested at least once before the day they killed someone. About a third of those defendants had been accused of violent crimes, including assault, battery and robbery.(7)
- **This bill does not make women safer.** I find it ironic that proponents of this bill claim to be so concerned about women’s safety. They have stated that “Women need this bill to protect themselves from their abusers.” Yet they tend to be the same people who oppose Red Flag laws. Women can already shoot an intruder or abuser in their home to protect themselves. Or in public if there is no clear route of escape. Wouldn’t it be a lot better if the abuser didn’t have a gun? If you want to protect women, allow the guns of their abusers to be taken away for a short period of time while it is determined whether the woman is at risk and a final determination can be made.

References:

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5-year-old dies after being caught in crossfire during fight over \$180, Jacksonville sheriff says

eight children or teens killed by guns each day in the United States, it is clear that families in suburban and rural communities are also devastated by gun violence, whether an individual accident or a mass shooting at a school. Available figures show that in the last ten years, at least 1,134 children aged 17 and under were unintentionally killed by firearms, including at least 46 children in Pennsylvania. Approximately 10,000 children are injured or killed by guns each year. In addition to accidental shootings, suicides and homicides using firearms end the lives of many young people. Child's world.com Cyndi Maurer PhD., Editor

American children die by guns 11 times as often as children in other high-income countries, according to an article published in the *Journal of Trauma, Injury, Infection, and Critical Care*.

Gun violence is 2nd leading cause of death for children and first cause of death for black children. Brady Center