

December 4, 2018

Senator Bill Coley  
Chairperson, Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, OH 43215

**Re: Opposition to HB 228, “Stand Your Ground” Bill**

Dear Chairman Coley and Members of the Committee,

My name is Adeel Bari and I am a student at The Ohio State University. From the bottom of my heart, I want to thank you for giving me and my peers an opportunity to not only be heard tonight, but to be **listened** to. I want to start off by reminding the committee, as well as our state senators, that public safety will never be a partisan issue. On Tuesday night, my peers and I will testify before you to voice our opposition against House Bill 228, not as Republicans and Democrats, but as concerned citizens of our great state.

I find myself thanking God, now more than ever, that I haven't lost a loved one to gun violence, and I hope it stays that way. HB228, designed to heighten public safety, will do just the opposite, creating an environment in which citizens take the law into their own hands. The bill would decrease the role that law enforcement currently has mediating hostile situations as trained professionals. In the same way that we trust extensively trained medical professionals to treat us when lives are on the line, we must trust those who are properly trained to protect us when lives are so abundantly lost to misused firearms.

In today's world we are quickly becoming obsessed with analytics and statistics specifically designed to win arguments. A statistic that has become a staple of the argument against HB 228 comes from a study done by Cheng Cheng and Mark Hoekstra down at Texas A&M University stating that the passage of similar “Stand Your Ground” bills in 20 states ‘led to a statistically significant 8 percent net increase in the number of reported murders and non-negligent manslaughters’, which translates into and additional 600 deaths per year. It goes without saying that each of our State Senators understand the magnitude and weight of losing 600 more lives to misused weaponry. What I wish is for our Senators to consider this figure with an isolated scope as opposed to a statistic. Begin by picturing just one more life lost, because one more Ohioan lost gun-related violence is too many. We need to stop conducting cost-benefit analyses with regards to human lives and death totals.

We stand before you as a voice for the opposition of HB 228 because that is our civic duty, but the next victim could very well be one of us. Our Senators were all elected by citizens like me and my friends who will speak before you. Our Senators were elected to protect us.

I ask you and your colleagues to vote against House Bill 228 in order to protect innocent, hardworking citizens, students, and families across the great state of Ohio.

Thank you, again, for your time.

Adeel Bari