

Michael Moore

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Letter opposing HB-796

Greetings Chair Hambley, Vice Chair Patton, Ranking Member Brown, and the members of the Civil Justice Committee –

My name is Michael Moore. I am a long-time resident of Columbus, an educator, and a caregiver as a licensed massage therapist in the state of Ohio.

I am very concerned with HB-796 and write to ask you to oppose this shockingly unnecessary and dangerous measure.

Ohio, like every state, has long had reasonable self-defense protections that govern the use of force by citizens. These rightly encourage people to avoid hurting each other and use force proportionally and only where necessary.

We should be shocked at the very idea of encouraging otherwise. “Stand your ground” laws like HB 796 that encourage gun violence as a first choice should strike any reasonable person as a way to only increase violent crime.

The American Bar Association finds exactly that. ⁱ

In studying the effectiveness of “stand your ground” laws, a task force led by the ABA in 2014 studied the impact of these laws across the country. They found a significant increase in homicide and little benefit to genuine self-defense cases. ⁱⁱ An ongoing RAND Corporation study of gun policies confirms this is still true today, and notes “stand your ground” laws as the policy which may most increase gun violence. ⁱⁱⁱ The ABA recommends that states do not implement such laws, and repeal them where they already exist. ^{iv}

Particularly notable in this year of growing awareness of inequity, the ABA task force found a distinct and dangerous disparity in how these laws are applied. These laws horrifically become a way to excuse murder of minority victims, with a non-white victim being one of the strongest factors for winning with this defense. ^v

We cannot let Ohio become the next state to encourage this type of murder.
We can do better.

The evidence says existing self-defense laws work without “stand your ground” and that “stand your ground” increases, not decreases, gun violence.

Say no to this unnecessary and dangerous bill and reject HB 796.

Sincerely,

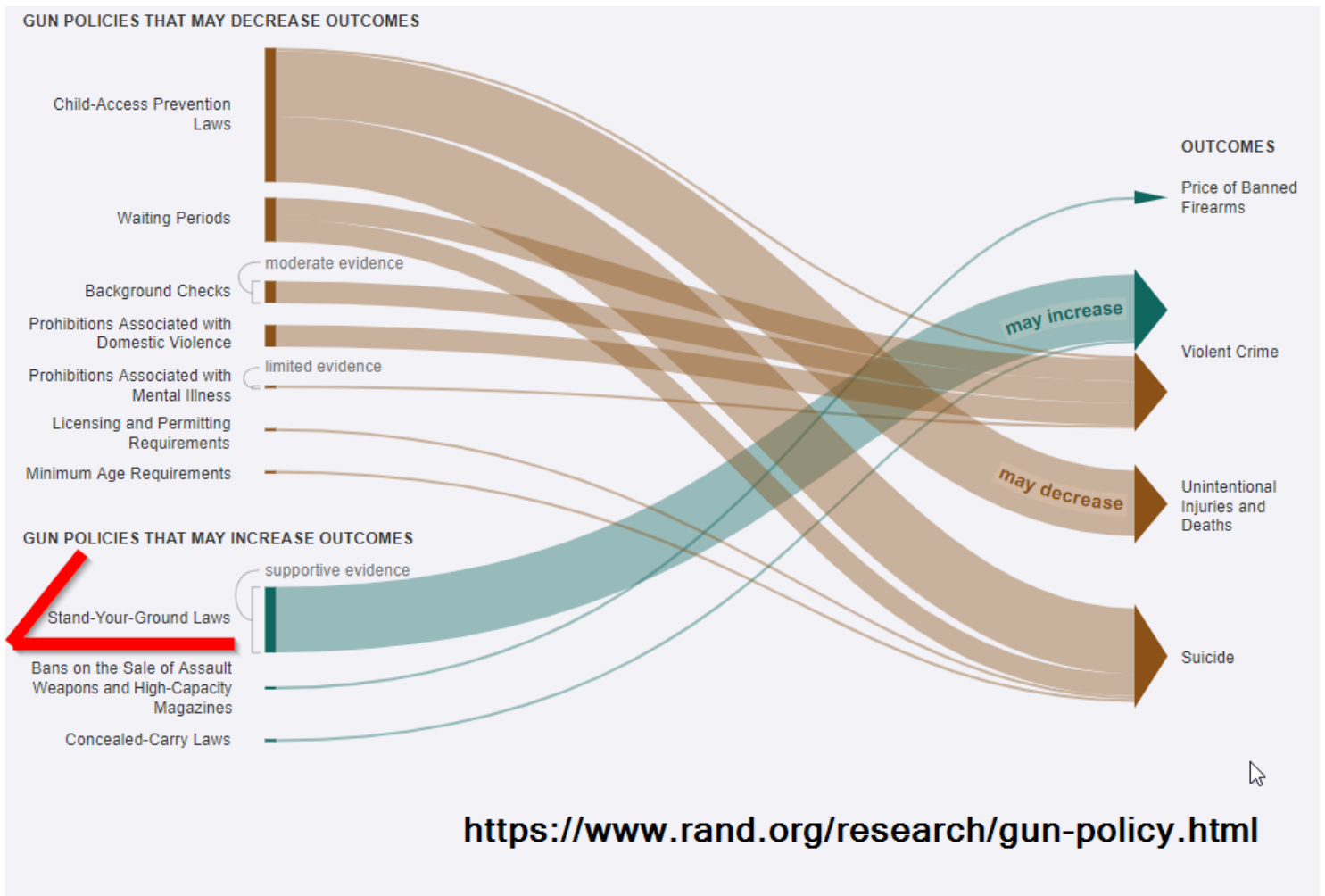


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ⁱ AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION & COALITION ON RACIAL AND ETHNIC JUSTICE, *National Task Force on Stand Your Ground Laws - Final Report and Recommendations* 66 (2015), <https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/corej/StandYourGroundReport.pdf>.

ⁱⁱ *Id.*

ⁱⁱⁱ RAND Corporation, *Informing the Gun Policy Debate*, <https://www.rand.org/research/gun-policy.html> (last visited Jun 9, 2020).

^{iv} AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION, *Stand Your Ground Resolution 1* (2015), https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/images/abanews/2015mm_hodres/112.pdf.

^v AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION AND COALITION ON RACIAL AND ETHNIC JUSTICE, *supra* note 1.