

Testimony of House Bill 796

House Civil Justice Committee

Submitted By:

Ann Morahan

Chair Hambley, Vice Chair Patton, Ranking Member Brown, and members of the committee, I thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to HB796.

I am a wife, mother, grandmother, and retired teacher now living in Westerville, Ohio. Now that I have the time, I feel it is my responsibility to monitor the legislation proposed by the Ohio House and Senate. Please be advised that we are watching you. Our lives and deaths depend on what you do.

The idea of stand-your-ground is once again being proposed through HB796. This idea was found in earlier bills such as HB228, and HB381. However, like the jellyfish *Turritopsis dohrnii*, which can turn back time by reverting to an earlier stage of their life cycle, it never dies. It is prudent to dissect this bill and list con and pros in that order.

- Stand-your-ground laws in other states have led to significant increases in gun homicides, including a 32% uptick in Florida. One nationwide study found that as many as 30 people a month are killed because of stand-your-ground laws. In just one year, over 350 people whose loved ones will face every holiday, birthday, and celebration for the rest of their lives without them.
- Stand-your-ground laws will especially hurt people of color. The American Bar Association found that the application of stand-your-ground laws is “unpredictable, uneven, and results in racial disparities.” After a summer of reckoning over police brutality and racial inequality nationwide, we must recognize the deadly impact of white vigilantism, a threat that has led to the murders of so many individuals like Trayvon Martin and Ahmaud Arbery. The mixture of guns and racism is deadly, and policies like stand-your-ground have been used to justify those murders.
- Current Ohio law on self-defense provides justice. No proponent of this bill has identified any court decision in Ohio where the application of duty to retreat resulted in an injustice. Disguise as a self-defense tactic, a person would be permitted to use deadly force against a subjective perceived threat from the start of an incident.

I can think of no reason for this bill. There are no pros. Did the NRA or Buckeye Firearms write this bill? Is its purpose to sell more guns and line their pockets?

Kill this bill!!!!