

Civil Justice Committee

Opposition Testimony on HB 796

12-15-2020

Chairman Hambley and Committee Members,

I am a long time Ohio resident, mother of a son who graduated from Jackson Local Schools, active in my church and proud grandmother of a child with special needs who lives in Columbus, OH.

I do not think that HB 796 should pass as research has shown that Stand Your Ground laws are extremely dangerous. This bill would leave the public with the impression that in Ohio, it's OK to shoot first and ask questions later. Florida was one of the first states to pass this bill. In 70% of their Stand Your Ground cases, the shooter could have safely left the situation without shooting. And 68% of the people who were shot in these cases were actually not armed.

In one case, a motorist shot a mentally disabled teen as the teen crossed the street, causing the motorist to brake suddenly. When the driver yelled or honked at the teen, the young man swore at him. So the motorist shot him and then claimed "Stand Your Ground" because he believed the teen was threatening him (the teen was not armed). We all know of the son of Congresswoman Lucy McBath (who is black). He was shot at a gas station by a white man for playing his music too loud. This same event happened again just this last week in another state. You should not be able to shot someone just because they make you nervous or mad and get away with it.

Establishing a Stand Your Ground law in businesses and public spaces will encourage escalation of violence in stores, parking lots, theaters, etc. This bill sounds like a tragedy waiting to happen.

Thank you for your attention,
Nancy Pierson