

Opposition Testimony on House Bill 796
Stand Your Ground
Civil Justice Committee

Submitted by:
Mike Hubbard

Chairman Hambley and Committee,

I am a lifelong resident of Ohio, and I have raised three daughters here. I am strongly opposed to HB 796 and all other “Stand Your Ground” legislation.

I am a senior citizen and I do not need Stand Your Ground provisions to protect myself. Current Ohio self-defense laws already provide for justice when people have to use deadly force to defend themselves when there is NO REASONABLE WAY for them to safely escape an attack. An elderly or handicapped person cannot be “reasonably” expected to run away or fight off a younger man. Therefore, the elderly person could already claim “self defense” if attacked. All Stand Your Ground will do is escalate more arguments into attacks, increasing the danger for everyone in the area, young and old alike. Proponents of this bill have failed to cite a single example of when an Ohioan’s life would have been saved by having a Stand Your Ground Law. A “Mega” study by the Rand Corp. concluded that Stand Your Ground laws do not promote legitimate self-defense. Instead, states that have such laws tend to have increased gun homicide and gun injury rates.

African Americans already bear a disproportionate burden from gun violence. In 2019, 13,577 people died from gun violence and 60% of them were African American. Stand Your Ground laws unfairly impact people of color. This bill allows people to shoot someone just because they anticipated them to be a threat (even if they weren’t armed). And young black males are more likely to be perceived as a threat than white males. Research shows that when a black person tries to invoke Stand Your Ground as their defense, they are 13 times LESS LIKELY to be successful in that claim than when a white shooter claims a Stand Your Ground Defense. In the current atmosphere of racial conflict in our country, adding Stand Your Ground will heighten racial tensions on all sides.

Ohio has a gun violence health crisis. More than 500 Ohioans die from gun violence each year. Ohio’s gun homicide rate went up 27% in the 1st 6 months of 2020 which is much higher than the national average. This bill will increase that number even more. Please do the responsible thing and reject HB 796.

Respectfully submitted,
Mike Hubbard
Clinton, OH