

Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Meredith Foster. I am a 23-year-old Ohio native who has recently returned to Columbus. I am strongly opposed to Stand Your Ground.

Ohioans already have the right to self-defense. Allowing deadly force simply because someone seems threatening in a public space is not only unnecessary, but dangerous.

No one should have the right to take another's life because they deem them threatening. Trayvon Martin was deemed "threatening" simply because he was black and walking home from the convenience store. This cost him his life and, because of a Stand Your Ground bill, his killer was allowed to walk free.

A study published by *Social Science and Medicine* examining Florida's Stand Your Ground law found indisputable racial bias in this kind of legislation. In these cases, "a suspect is twice as likely to be convicted of a crime if the victim is white." The United States Commission on Civil Rights also came to the conclusion of racial bias in the assertion and enforcement of justifiable homicide laws like this in their briefing, "Examining the Race Effects of Stand Your Ground Laws." To pass a bill of this nature at any time is unjust, but especially inappropriate during the current focus on systemic racism in our government.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote no on this incredibly dangerous bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.