

Testimony on SB 383  
Government Oversight and Reform Committee  
Submitted by: Rebecca Gorski

Chair Coley, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Craig and members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Rebecca Gorski. I am a resident of Geauga County and voicing my strong opposition to SB 383.

SB 383 specifies “a person has no duty to retreat before using force”, including lethal force, “in self-defence or defence of another.” This bill would allow a person to shoot and kill in public, even when there is a clear and safe alternative. Removing the duty to retreat that traditionally exists in public settings before using force in self-defence encourages escalated violence in situations that could be diffused in other ways. SB 383 is a Stand Your Ground bill, allowing anyone to shoot at will, and to shoot anyone who makes them nervous.

Research shows laws similar to SB 383 are a threat to public safety, with no evidence that these laws deter crime. In 2016 *Epidemiologic Reviews*, the leading review journal in public health, published a review of research looking at laws similar to SB 383, removing the duty to retreat, and found a correlation with an increase in homicide rates. In other states, laws removing the duty to retreat, such as SB 383, are associated with an 8% increase in firearm homicides. According to the *Journal of Human Resources*, each month approximately 30 to 50 people across the country are killed as a result of Stand Your Ground Laws, as well as a significant increase in firearm injuries resulting in emergency room visits and hospitalizations, putting a greater strain on our hospital systems.

Simply put, I urge you to follow the data. What makes people feel safer, such as a Stand Your Ground bill, is not actually what makes people safe when more lives are lost. Stand Your Ground laws, such as SB 383, are a danger to Ohioans. I ask you to consider my testimony and vote no on this dangerous bill. Thank you again for this opportunity to testify.

I am happy to respond to any questions you may have.