

Testimony on Senate Bill 383
Government Oversight and Reform Committee

Submitted by:
Molly Farrell

Chair Coley, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 383.

My name is Molly Farrell, and I am a Columbus resident. I vote in every election and have since I was 18. I was born, like all my eleven siblings, at Riverside Hospital just up the road from the statehouse, and my family has lived in Columbus since my great-great-grandparents immigrated to Jefferson City from Ireland in the mid-nineteenth century. Almost everyone in my extended family still lives in and around central Ohio.

I am writing today because the proposed “Stand Your Ground” legislation will increase gun violence in my community. States that have passed legislation like these have shown increases in deaths and injuries from firearms, and I don’t want this coming anywhere near Ohio. These laws don’t deter crime, and they doesn’t do anything more to protect those who act in self-defense than the laws we have on the books. Instead, it makes me, my family, and my community less safe.

I am sick and tired of having to tell you not to pass nonsense gun laws like this that make firearm makers richer and my people less safe. Most importantly to me right now, I know that these Stand Your Ground laws disproportionately harm my Black fellow citizens. How dare you pass racist laws like these that could kill more Black children like Trayvon Martin, and leave more Black families grieving?

My friend in college Emily Murray was murdered with a gun in Ohio. A high school classmate of my brother’s Brian Muha was murdered with a gun. My brother’s mother-in-law died by suicide with a gun. My friend’s brother died by suicide with a gun. Another brother’s childhood friend murdered his wife and then killed himself with a gun while his children were at home just a few blocks from the parish school we all attended. My cousin also murdered his wife and then killed himself with a gun. It is ridiculous that I have witnessed this much carnage by guns. And you are going to deliberately pass a law that will ravage more families?

Shame on you. You should be working to bring about safety in Ohio, the kind of safety that means that my 4 and 2 year old daughters' daycare here in Columbus doesn't need to practice drills for the event of a mass shooting. Instead you waste your time making sure that the next time I write to you about nonsense gun bills, I'll have another horrible story of senseless death and injury by guns to tell.

You must vote against this Stand Your Ground bill to make sure that another generation of my Ohio family has a chance to grow up.

Molly Farrell