

Shannon G. Hardin  
Columbus City Hall  
90 W. Broad St.  
Columbus, OH 43215

December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020

The Ohio Senate  
Members of the Government Oversight and Reform Committee  
William P. Coley II, Chair  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, OH 43215

William P. Coley II, Chair and Members of the Government Oversight and Reform Committee,

As Council President of the largest city in the State of Ohio, a Columbus native, and a young gay black man, I have a sacred responsibility to the residents of my city, and especially to its most vulnerable citizens.

Stand your ground is a dangerous distortion of the law of self-defense. Laws, similar to proposed Senate Bill 383, have disproportionately impacted black and brown people, and have significantly increased incidents of gun violence in the United States.

Eight years ago, a seventeen year old unarmed black high school student named Trayvon Martin was gunned down in Florida. His murderer never met justice. Two years ago, Markeis McGlockton, a twenty-eight year old unarmed black man, also in Florida, was murdered in front of his high school sweetheart and three young children, by a man who claimed he was “standing his ground.”

According to the Urban Institute, “A white civilian shooter who kills a black victim is three hundred and fifty percent more likely to be found to be justified than if the same shooter killed a white victim.” This data demonstrates that Stand Your Ground does not protect people who look like me.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/\\_stand\\_your\\_ground\\_kills\\_-\\_how\\_these\\_nra-backed\\_laws\\_promote\\_racist\\_violence\\_1.pdf](https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/_stand_your_ground_kills_-_how_these_nra-backed_laws_promote_racist_violence_1.pdf) Page 10



**SHANNON G. HARDIN, PRESIDENT | ELIZABETH C. BROWN, PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE  
MITCHELL J. BROWN | ROB DORANS | SHAYLA D. FAVOR | EMMANUEL V. REMY | PRISCILLA R. TYSON**

**CITY CLERK | ANDREA BLEVINS, CMC**

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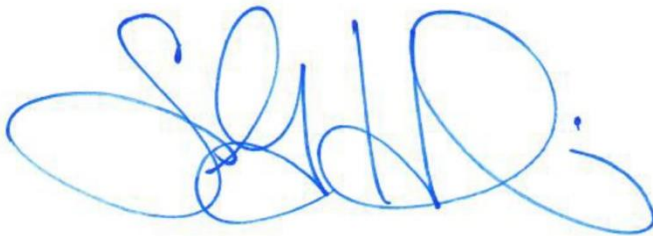
Stand your ground laws also exacerbate gender bias. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, “An analysis of Florida cases found that female defendants accused of killing a partner were twice as likely to be convicted as male defendants in comparable cases.”<sup>2</sup>

The Florida stand your ground law led to a thirty-two percent increase in rates of firearm homicide and a twenty-four percent increase in homicide rates overall.<sup>3</sup> I urge you to vote no on Senate Bill 383 which would allow those who seek violence to take the law into their own hands with deadly consequences.

Gun violence plagues Ohio communities. In Columbus alone there have been over one hundred and forty four homicides in 2020.<sup>4</sup> Many of which were children, with the youngest victim being two years old.<sup>5</sup> Over seventy-five percent of homicide victims in Columbus in 2020 were black.<sup>6</sup>

Senate Bill 383 will only increase the incidents of violence in Ohio cities, like Columbus. Senate Bill 383 will disproportionately affect people of color and women. I often say that if it is not for all, it’s not for us, and Senate Bill 383 is not for all, it’s not for Columbus, and it’s most assuredly not for the State of Ohio.

Sincerely,



Shannon G. Hardin  
Columbus City Council President

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/\\_stand\\_your\\_ground\\_kills\\_-\\_how\\_these\\_nra-backed\\_laws\\_promote\\_racist\\_violence\\_1.pdf](https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/_stand_your_ground_kills_-_how_these_nra-backed_laws_promote_racist_violence_1.pdf) Page 11

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/\\_stand\\_your\\_ground\\_kills\\_-\\_how\\_these\\_nra-backed\\_laws\\_promote\\_racist\\_violence\\_1.pdf](https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/_stand_your_ground_kills_-_how_these_nra-backed_laws_promote_racist_violence_1.pdf) Page 12

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dispatch.com/story/news/crime/2020/11/13/grim-milestone-columbus-passes-record-homicide-total/6058028002/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.dispatch.com/story/news/crime/2020/11/13/grim-milestone-columbus-passes-record-homicide-total/6058028002/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://abc6onyourside.com/news/local/columbus-homicide-stats-oct-2020>



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