

Witness Against HB 381

I oppose this bill. The American Bar Association has also opposed stand-your-ground Bills. A 2014 report by the American Bar Association found that there was no empirical evidence to show that “stand your ground” bills increased public safety. Their research shows that a white shooter with a Black victim was 350% more likely to be found justified than a white-on-white interaction. Reversely, a Black shooter with a white victim was only found justified 3% of the time. We’ve seen in the news over and over again that racist biases, whether acknowledged or not, kill Black people. This law would essentially deputize everyday citizens, emboldening them to take the law into their own hands. The immunity clause allows for citizens to potentially take forceful action based on their own subjective, and perhaps racially biased views, with little fear of consequence.

With protests against police brutality happening right outside the statehouse, it is deplorable to vote anything but no to HB 381. Many studies have shown that stand your ground laws disproportionately victimize black people and people of color. Self-defense is already allowed by laws in the state. There is no need to add an element of vigilantism to this. We do not want a tragedy like Trayvon Martins- where George Zimmerman was *explicitly* told by safety professionals not to pursue Trayvon- to happen in Ohio. This bill will not protect Ohioans and is completely unnecessary.