

3732 Congreve Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45213
June 9, 2020

Dear Chairman Lang, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Leland, and Members of the Criminal Justice Committee,

I am writing as a white Christian mom and grandmother to beg you to stop HB 381. Its dramatic expansion of the circumstances in which a person has no duty to retreat, and can use deadly force against another because of "reasonable belief" of danger, greatly increases the risk of tragedies like the murder of Ahmaud Arbery. We need you to show leadership to reduce violence and build trust among Ohio's African-American citizens that they can live in safety, and bring up their sons and daughters secure in that knowledge.

I have been volunteering for decades as part of the anti-racism work of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio. I witness the ways white people react to black people out of an unjustified fear of violence. The terrible threats leveled by Amy Cooper at birdwatcher Christian Cooper in Central Park revealed this dynamic for all of us to see with their own eyes.

I've been part of student exchange programs for many years, through AFS and Rotary, and as a host mom responsible for other people's precious children, was shattered when a high school exchange student from Japan, on his way to a Halloween party, knocked at the door of the wrong house by mistake, and was shot and killed by the owner, probably because he wasn't a white kid. HB 381 would enormously expand the territory in which people could murder others, and get away scot free.

This bill - at ANY time but especially now - undermines public safety by putting African-American Ohioans at greater risk of being summarily executed by their neighbors.

Stop it. Please.

Yours,
Ariel Miller
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