



**Criminal Justice Committee
House Bill 367 Sponsor Testimony
Representative Dontavius L. Jarrells
Andre's Law**

December 7th, 2022

Chairman LaRe, Vice-Chair White, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the Criminal Justice Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 367, also known as “Andre’s Law”. Andre Hill was a 47-year-old African-American man from my district. A father and a grandfather, Andre was described as “a provider and protector” and a man who “loved his family and was an administrator of love”.

On December 22, 2020, Andre was shot and killed by Officer Adam Coy of the Columbus Division of Police. Officer Coy had been called to the neighborhood around 1:49 A.M. in response to a non-emergency call from a neighbor who reportedly witnessed someone sit in an SUV and turn the car on and off. Andre was leaving a friend's house holding an illuminated smartphone in his left hand when Officer Coy confronted him.

Officer Coy shot Andre three times in the right leg and once in the chest as he yelled at him to show his hands. Officer Coy did not turn on his body-worn camera before the shooting, but the camera had a 60-second look-back feature that recorded the minute prior, including the shooting, with video but not audio. After Andre was shot, several officers handcuffed him while he laid unresponsive on the ground. Video recordings from Officer Coy and others show that none of the multiple

officers on the scene made an attempt to render first aid to Andre until ten minutes after he was shot.

On February 3, 2021, a Franklin County grand jury indicted Officer Coy on charges of murder (one count), felonious assault (one count) and dereliction of duty (two counts). The latter two charges are based on Officer Coy's failure to activate his body camera and failing to alert other officers that he believed Hill posed a threat. Though Andre's family may receive the justice they deserve, a court ruling in their favor will never replace the void left by the loss of a compassionate father and grandfather.

Following this horrific and tragic event, the Columbus City Council unanimously approved a new city ordinance titled "Andre's Law". This law requires city police to turn on cameras during "enforcement actions" (including "all police stops, pursuits, uses of force, arrests, forced entries and any adversarial encounters") whenever they approach people or exit patrol cars.

As this ordinance was being passed at the local-level, I simultaneously worked to pass this crucial law at the state-level with former State Representative and current Franklin County Commissioner Erica C. Crawley. This important piece of legislation, HB 367, is what we bring before you today.

HB 367 is an example of common-sense police reform legislation that honors the life of Andre Hill and ensures that those who commit these fatal crimes are held accountable. Mirroring some of the provisions in the City of Columbus's city ordinance, Andre's Law implements the following procedures:

- If a law enforcement agency receives a complaint regarding alleged misconduct by an officer, the agency must publicly release all unedited video and recordings of the alleged incident within 21 days of receiving the complaint.
- If the recorded alleged incident involves an individual's death, the law enforcement agency shall provide the recording to the person's spouse, parent, legal guardian, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, significant other, or legal representative upon request.
- Require every law enforcement agency in Ohio, by July 1, 2023, to provide body cameras to each officer in the agency (including correctional officers).
- Limit the circumstances in which an officer may turn off the body camera (i.e. when recording personal information not pertinent to a case; during an extended period of inactivity; during administrative, tactical, or management discussions).
- If an officer fails to turn on their body camera or dashboard camera, or tampers with any portion of the recording, it is inferred that the missing recording would have demonstrated misconduct by the officer.

We cannot ignore the crisis our state faces with rampant police brutality. In 2021, data from a project titled "Mapping Police Violence" shows that police killed 31 people in Ohio. Alarming, African-American people are nearly **five times more likely** to be killed by police than White Ohioans. Between 2013 and 2022, there have been 79 killings of African-American Ohioans per every 1 million people; the data shows

that for White Ohioans, this number is only 16. The evidence is clear, convincing, and consequential: **we must act to fix this flaw in our criminal justice system.**

Through common-sense legislation like Andre's Law, we can come together to create proactive rather than reactive measures when it comes to potential officer-involved misconduct to avoid these tragedies in the future. Public safety and the freedom of Ohioans to live without fear of police brutality are not partisan issues. Further, it is undeniably important that we work to provide transparency for the families of those who are affected by officer-involved shootings and make certain that justice is served. All Ohioans, no matter who they are or where they live, deserve the freedom to be safe in their communities.

Thank you again for allowing me to testify on what I believe is a critical first-step toward promoting racial equality in Ohio. At this time, I am happy to answer any questions you may have.