

Elana Story, Idaho Chapter Leader

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Elana Story. I am here representing Moms Demand Action's Idaho Chapter and I oppose Senate Bill 1313. I am a supporter of the second amendment and come from a family of multiple generations of proud and responsible gun owners.

I am here as a concerned mother of two beautiful children and a citizen concerned for all Idahoans. We are so blessed to live in an incredible state full of beauty and pride. I feel so fortunate to be able to raise my children in such an environment.

I want to thank you all for being public representatives and doing this tough work of creating laws. I have so much respect for you and the difficult decisions that you make every day. I think we can all agree that we want the best and safest Idaho we could possibly have. We are all here with a common goal to protect Idahoans from dangerous people. My concern with this bill is the unintended consequences it could have.

Idaho law already recognizes the right to self-defense and does not include a duty to retreat. On the surface, this bill might look technical and as though it's not a big departure from Idaho's current standard.

But SB 1313 leaves out crucial parts of our current longstanding self defense standard. Our current law prohibits someone from using deadly force if they are the initiator of the fight. And it prohibits someone from tracking down and shooting someone in revenge. SB 1313 does not prohibit these things.

This bill encourages people to "shoot first ask questions later." I ask you - what kind of message does passing this bill send to Idahoans? It's simply empowering people to shoot first, rather than deescalate a situation. Looking at other states that have implemented similar Stand Your Ground bills, we should expect that this bill will cause homicides in Idaho to increase. One study found that Stand Your Ground Laws create an additional 600 homicides per year. And in 2013 the Tampa Bay Times found that at least 26 children and teens had been killed in Florida Stand Your Ground cases since 2005.

A legislator I spoke to last week told me he doesn't believe this changes much in the law. If that is the case, then why do we need it? Isn't the perception of encouraging vigilantism enough of a reason not to pass this? This is a solution looking for a problem. We don't currently have an issue where people are going to jail for defending themselves. Why would we pass an unnecessary law, especially when we know that the unintended consequences can be so deadly?

SB1313 puts innocent people at risk. These people could be my children, or my friends' children, or your children and grandchildren. Or it could be me or you. It could put people who carry at higher risk, since they are already showing a potential "threat" of a deadly weapon. Bar

fights could now escalate to deadly shootings. My future teenage children could get into a fender bender which could escalate to a confrontation leading to a deadly shooting.

We live in a state that has a low homicide rate and, thank the lord, we are doing pretty well keeping our families safe. I pray that continues everyday, and can't help to feel this bill defeats that purpose. Please oppose SB1313 and keep our Idaho homicide rate low and all Idahoans safe.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elana Hoy". The signature is written in dark ink and features a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.