



City of Pittsburgh

510 City-County Building
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Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Text File

Introduced: 3/27/2012

Bill No: 2012-0235, **Version:** 1

Committee: City Council

Status: Adopted

WHEREAS, on October 5, 2005, the Florida Statute Justifiable Use of Force was put into effect, which justifies the use of defensive force if a person is “presumed to have held a reasonable fear of imminent peril of death or great bodily harm to himself or herself or another”; and,

WHEREAS, the statute Justifiable Use of Force clearly states “the person against whom the defensive force was used was in the process of unlawfully and forcefully entering, or had unlawfully and forcible entered, a dwelling, residence, or occupied vehicle, or if that person had removed or was attempting to remove another against the person's will from the dwelling, residence, or occupied vehicle”; and,

WHEREAS, during the recent tragedy of Trayvon Martin, a neighborhood watch resident George Zimmerman shot and killed 17 year old Trayvon Martin and then claimed he was protected under Florida Statute 776.012 Justifiable Use of Force because he was using self-defense against a teenage boy who was unarmed and walking back to a parent's home near the scene of the crime; and,

WHEREAS, the case, which has received national attention in recent weeks, should serve to highlight the larger issues of racial stereotyping and senseless violence, a reminder that similar cases not receiving the same attention still occur across the country, with innocent children, youths and adults suffering the consequences of random acts of violence; and,

WHEREAS, Council supports the case of swift and true justice for the family of Trayvon Martin, and for families across the United States who have lost loved ones to senseless acts of violence as a consequence of unfortunate social norms and misguided public policies which permit such acts to occur;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby call upon Florida State Gov. Rick Scott and the Florida Attorney General to re-open the investigation, and the Florida State Legislature to amend or repeal the Florida Statute 776.012 Justifiable Use of Force.