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MOMS DEMAND ACTION FOUNDER SHANNON WATTS RESPONDS TO VERDICT IN TRIAL OF JORDAN DAVIS'S KILLER; JORDAN'S MOTHER, LUCIA MCBATH, IS NATIONAL SPOKESPERSON

(Indianapolis, IN) Feb. 15, 2014 – We are saddened and disappointed that the jury in the trial of Jordan Davis's killer was unable to reach a full verdict. Our hearts are with Jordan's family as they learn that they will have to bear another trial and more waiting for justice. Jordan and his family deserve closure in the killing of their son, and we will continue to shine a spotlight on our country's broken Stand Your Ground laws.

Stand Your Ground laws put our children, families, and communities at risk because they give everyday, untrained citizens more leeway to shoot than the United States military gives soldiers in war zones. Children – like Jordan Davis – who may simply be in the wrong place at the wrong time are now more likely to die at the hands of the armed and angry. This is unacceptable.

Jordan's fate is not an isolated one: He is one of at least 26 children and teens killed in Florida Stand Your Ground cases since 2005. Stand Your Ground laws – also called "shoot first" laws because they empower armed vigilantism – are associated with a clear increase in homicides, resulting in up to 700 more homicides nationwide each year, according to a 2012 study by Texas A&M researchers.

Research indicates that Stand Your Ground laws embolden people to shoot when they could have resolved conflicts by using a lesser degree of force or simply walking away. After Florida passed its Stand Your Ground law, its justifiable homicide rate tripled. Over the same time period, the justifiable homicide rate decreased in states that did not pass Stand Your Ground laws.

This increase in homicides due to Stand Your Ground laws disproportionately affects communities of color. The Urban Institute found that when white shooters kill black victims, the resulting homicides are 11 times more likely to be deemed justifiable than when the shooter is black and the victim is white.

And despite the assertions of Stand Your Ground supporters, the Texas A&M researchers found no evidence that Stand Your Ground laws deter crime.

Now that the research on Stand Your Ground laws is clear, states are listening. Though at least seven states had Stand Your Ground legislation pending at the time of Trayvon Martin's shooting death in February 2012, not one of those bills became law. Trayvon's death served a national wake-up call: No additional states have become Stand Your Ground states since. And legislators in at least 11 states have introduced bills to scale back or repeal their laws, and one such reform bill passed in Louisiana.

During a recent legislative hearing to repeal Florida's Stand Your Ground law, Davis's mother Lucia McBath, a national spokesperson for Moms Demand Action, said, "My grief is unbearable at times. I'm here as a face of the countless victims of gun violence." Lucia has funneled her grief into activism and moms will continue to fight along side her, committed to undoing the damage these ill-conceived laws have created.

American mothers have had enough and we are prepared to go toe-to-toe with our country's insidious gun lobby. We will stand our ground for children like Jordan Davis and we will not stop until Stand Your Ground laws are rolled back.

About Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America

Much like Mothers Against Drunk Driving was created to change laws regarding drunk driving, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America was created to build support for common-sense gun reforms. The nonpartisan grassroots movement of American mothers is demanding new and stronger solutions to lax gun laws and loopholes that jeopardize the safety of our children and families. In just one year, the organization has more than 130,000 members with a chapter in every state in the country. The group recently joined forces with [Mayors Against Illegal Guns](#), the largest gun violence prevention organization in the country. For more information or to get involved visit www.momsdemandaction.org. Follow us on Facebook www.facebook.com/MomsDemandAction or on Twitter [@MomsDemand](https://twitter.com/MomsDemand)

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