

1 State of Arkansas  
2 93rd General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2021  
4

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 24

5 By: Senators B. Ballinger, Rapert, G. Stubblefield, T. Garner, B. Johnson, Flippo, Hester, D. Wallace,  
6 Hill, Irvin, M. Johnson, Beckham, Gilmore, Rice  
7 By: Representatives Pilkington, Ray, Beatty Jr., Wardlaw, C. Cooper, Rye, Richmond, Gonzales,  
8 Cavanaugh, McCollum, Breaux, Bentley, Underwood, Cloud, Crawford  
9

## For An Act To Be Entitled

11 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON WITH THE  
12 USE OF PHYSICAL FORCE OR DEADLY PHYSICAL FORCE; AND  
13 FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
14  
15

## Subtitle

16 CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON WITH  
17 THE USE OF PHYSICAL FORCE OR DEADLY  
18 PHYSICAL FORCE.  
19  
20  
21

22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
23

24 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 5-2-606 is amended to read as follows:  
25 5-2-606. Use of physical force in defense of a person.

26 (a)(1) A person is justified in using physical force upon another  
27 person to defend himself or herself or a third person from what the person  
28 reasonably believes to be the use or imminent use of unlawful physical force  
29 by that other person, and the person may use a degree of physical force that  
30 he or she reasonably believes to be necessary.

31 (2) However, the person may not use deadly physical force except  
32 as provided in § 5-2-607.

33 (b) A person is not justified in using physical force upon another  
34 person if:

35 (1) With purpose to cause physical injury or death to the other  
36 person, the person provokes the use of unlawful physical force by the other



1 person;

2 (2)(A) The person is the initial aggressor.

3 (B) However, the initial aggressor's use of physical force  
4 upon another person is justifiable if:

5 (i) The initial aggressor in good faith withdraws  
6 from the encounter and effectively communicates to the other person his or  
7 her purpose to withdraw from the encounter; and

8 (ii) The other person continues or threatens to  
9 continue the use of unlawful physical force; or

10 (3) The physical force involved is the product of a combat by  
11 agreement not authorized by law.

12 (c) A person who uses or threatens to use physical force as otherwise  
13 permitted under this subchapter does not have a duty to retreat before using  
14 or threatening to use the physical force if the person is:

15 (1) Lawfully present in the location;

16 (2) Not engaged in criminal activity that gives rise to the need  
17 to use physical force; and

18 (3) Not engaged in any activity in furtherance of a criminal  
19 gang, organization, or enterprise as defined under § 5-74-103.

20

21 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 5-2-607 is amended to read as follows:

22 5-2-607. Use of deadly physical force in defense of a person.

23 (a) A person is justified in using deadly physical force upon another  
24 person if the person reasonably believes that the other person is:

25 (1) Committing or about to commit a felony involving physical  
26 force or violence;

27 (2) Using or about to use unlawful deadly physical force; or

28 (3) Imminently endangering the person's life or imminently about  
29 to victimize the person ~~as described in § 9-15-103~~ from the continuation of a  
30 pattern of domestic abuse.

31 ~~(b) A person may not use deadly physical force in self-defense if the~~  
32 ~~person knows that he or she can avoid the necessity of using deadly physical~~  
33 ~~force;~~

34 ~~(1)(A) By retreating;~~

35 ~~(B) However, a person is not required to retreat if the~~  
36 ~~person is;~~

1                   ~~(i) Unable to retreat with complete safety;~~  
2                   ~~(ii) In the person's dwelling or on the curtilage~~  
3 ~~surrounding the person's dwelling and was not the original aggressor; or~~  
4                   ~~(iii) A law enforcement officer or a person~~  
5 ~~assisting at the direction of a law enforcement officer; or~~  
6                   ~~(2) With complete safety by surrendering possession of property~~  
7 ~~to a person claiming a lawful right to possession of the property.~~

8           (b) A person is not required to retreat before using deadly physical  
9 force if the person:

10                   (1) Is lawfully present at the location where deadly physical  
11 force is used;

12                   (2) Has a reasonable belief that the person against whom the  
13 deadly physical force is used is imminently threatening to cause death or  
14 serious physical injury to the person or another person;

15                   (3) Except as provided under § 5-2-606(b)(2)(B), is not the  
16 initial aggressor and has not provoked the person against whom the deadly  
17 physical force is used;

18                   (4) Is not committing a felony offense of unlawful possession of  
19 a weapon used to employ the deadly physical force, unless the person is in or  
20 at the person's dwelling or in the curtilage surrounding the person's  
21 dwelling;

22                   (5) Is not engaged in criminal activity that gives rise to the  
23 need for the use of deadly physical force at the time the deadly physical  
24 force is used; and

25                   (6) Is not engaged in any activity in furtherance of a criminal  
26 gang, organization, or enterprise as defined in § 5-74-103.

27           (c) As used in this section:

28                   (1) "Curtilage" means the land adjoining a dwelling that is  
29 convenient for residential purposes and habitually used for residential  
30 purposes, but not necessarily enclosed, and includes an outbuilding that is  
31 directly and intimately connected with the dwelling and in close proximity to  
32 the dwelling; and

33                   (2) "Domestic abuse" means:

34                           (A) Physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or the  
35 infliction of fear of imminent physical harm, bodily injury, or assault  
36 between family or household members; or

1 (B) Any sexual conduct between family or household  
2 members, whether minors or adults, that constitutes a crime under the laws of  
3 this state.

4  
5 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 5-2-615 is amended to read as follows:

6 5-2-615. Use of physical force by a pregnant woman in defense of her  
7 unborn child.

8 (a) As used in this section:

9 (1) "Pregnant" means the female reproductive condition of having  
10 an unborn child in the female's body; and

11 (2) "Unborn child" means the offspring of human beings from  
12 conception until birth.

13 (b) A pregnant woman is justified in using physical force or deadly  
14 physical force against another person to protect her unborn child if, under  
15 the circumstances as the pregnant woman reasonably believes them to be, she  
16 would be justified under § 5-2-606 or § 5-2-607 in using physical force or  
17 deadly physical force to protect herself against the unlawful physical force  
18 or unlawful deadly physical force she reasonably believes to be threatening  
19 her unborn child.

20 (c) The justification for using physical force or deadly physical  
21 force against another person to protect a pregnant woman's unborn child is  
22 not available if:

23 ~~(1) The the use of the physical force or deadly physical force~~  
24 ~~for protection was used by a person other than the pregnant woman; or~~

25 ~~(2)(A) The use of the deadly physical force for protection would~~  
26 ~~not be allowed under § 5-2-607(b).~~

27 ~~(B) However, the pregnant woman is not obligated to~~  
28 ~~retreat or surrender possession of property as described in § 5-2-607(b)~~  
29 ~~unless the pregnant woman knows she can avoid the necessity of using deadly~~  
30 ~~physical force and simultaneously ensure the complete safety of her unborn~~  
31 ~~child.~~