

**Representative Karianne Lisonbee** proposes the following substitute bill:

**SELF DEFENSE AMENDMENTS**

2021 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Karianne Lisonbee**

Senate Sponsor: David P. Hinkins

Cosponsor: Travis M. Seegmiller

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill addresses the justifiable use or threatened use of force.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- ▶ defines the defense of justifiable use or threatened use of force; and
- ▶ establishes procedures for determining the applicability of the defense.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**77-18a-1**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2020, Chapter 185

ENACTS:

**76-2-309**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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25 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

26 Section 1. Section **76-2-309** is enacted to read:

27 **76-2-309. Justified use of force.**

28 (1) An individual who uses or threatens to use force as permitted in Sections [76-2-402](#),  
29 [76-2-405](#), [76-2-406](#), [76-2-407](#), or [76-2-408](#) is justified in that conduct.

30 (2) Subsection (1) does not apply if:

31 (a) the individual against whom force was used or threatened is a law enforcement  
32 officer, as defined in Section [53-13-103](#);

33 (b) the officer was acting in the performance of the officer's official duties; and

34 (c) (i) the officer was identified as an officer by the officer in accordance with any  
35 applicable law; or

36 (ii) the individual using or threatening to use force knew or reasonably should have  
37 known that the officer was a law enforcement officer.

38 (3) (a) Upon motion of the defendant filed in accordance with Rule 12 of the Utah  
39 Rules of Criminal Procedure, the court shall hear evidence on the issue of justification under  
40 this section and shall determine as a matter of fact and law whether the defendant was justified  
41 in the use or threatened use of force.

42 (b) At the pretrial justification hearing, after the defendant makes a prima facie claim  
43 of justification, the prosecution has the burden to prove by clear and convincing evidence that  
44 the defendant's use or threatened use of force was not justified.

45 (c) (i) If the court determines that the state has not met the state's burden described in  
46 Subsection (3)(b), the court shall dismiss the charge with prejudice.

47 (ii) The state may appeal a court's order dismissing a charge under Subsection (3)(c)(i)  
48 in accordance with Section [77-18a-1](#).

49 (iii) If a court determines after the pretrial justification hearing that the state has met  
50 the state's burden described in Subsection (3)(b), the issue of justification may be raised by the  
51 defendant to the jury at trial and, if raised by the defendant, the state shall have the burden to  
52 prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant's use or threatened use of force was not  
53 justified.

54 (iv) At trial, a court's determination that the state met the state's burden under  
55 Subsection (3)(c)(iii) is not admissible and may not be referenced by the prosecution.

56 Section 2. Section 77-18a-1 is amended to read:

57 **77-18a-1. Appeals -- When proper.**

58 (1) A defendant may, as a matter of right, appeal from:

59 (a) a final judgment of conviction, whether by verdict or plea;

60 (b) an order made after judgment that affects the substantial rights of the defendant;

61 (c) an order adjudicating the defendant's competency to proceed further in a pending  
62 prosecution; or

63 (d) an order denying bail, as provided in Section 77-20-1.

64 (2) In addition to any appeal permitted by Subsection (1), a defendant may seek  
65 discretionary appellate review of any interlocutory order.

66 (3) The prosecution may, as a matter of right, appeal from:

67 (a) a final judgment of dismissal, including a dismissal of a felony information  
68 following a refusal to bind the defendant over for trial;

69 (b) a pretrial order dismissing a charge on the ground that the court's suppression of  
70 evidence has substantially impaired the prosecution's case;

71 (c) an order granting a motion to withdraw a plea of guilty or no contest;

72 (d) an order arresting judgment or granting a motion for merger;

73 (e) an order terminating the prosecution because of a finding of double jeopardy or  
74 denial of a speedy trial;

75 (f) an order granting a new trial;

76 (g) an order holding a statute or any part of it invalid;

77 (h) an order adjudicating the defendant's competency to proceed further in a pending  
78 prosecution;

79 (i) an order finding, pursuant to Title 77, Chapter 19, Part 2, Competency for  
80 Execution, that an inmate sentenced to death is incompetent to be executed;

81 (j) an order reducing the degree of offense pursuant to Section 76-3-402; [or]

82 (k) an illegal sentence[-]; or

83 (l) an order dismissing a charge pursuant to Subsection 76-2-309(3).

84 (4) In addition to any appeal permitted by Subsection (3), the prosecution may seek  
85 discretionary appellate review of any interlocutory order entered before jeopardy attaches.