Stand-your-ground foes push Florida boycott

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A California lawmaker says he'll urge state residents and business groups to stop traveling to **Florida** - and may seek more financially painful sanctions against the Sunshine State - in the wake of a **Florida** jury finding George Zimmerman not guilty in the killing of Trayvon Martin.

Singer-songwriter Stevie Wonder says he won't perform in **Florida** until its lawmakers repeal the stand-your-ground law used in Zimmerman's defense. Online petitions are calling for boycotts and the son of Martin Luther King Jr. says people should consider not drinking **Florida** orange juice.

Yet as momentum builds for boycotts to punish **Florida** , Floridians who would be affected say they shouldn't be punished for the actions of Zimmerman or the jury that acquitted him, and one economic expert said a boycott call from California wouldn't gain traction.

Black Caucus proposalStill, Assemblyman Chris Holden, D-Pasadena, said he will propose a resolution for a boycott along with the other members of the California Legislative Black Caucus because he thinks the state can push **Florida** to repeal its stand-your-ground law.

"Certainly, boycotts are a reasonable path that can be taken when you're trying to increase conversation and hopefully encourage change, especially in this area where we believe the law has the potential of injuring the public and not being fair to everyone," Holden said.

Different destination. He said the resolution will call on business groups and trade organizations considering conferences or conventions in **Florida** to go elsewhere and for people considering a **Florida** vacation to choose another destination. Holden also said he and others are looking at possibly going further, perhaps having California halt new contracts with **Florida** businesses, but they are still examining legal requirements and economic ramifications.

He said he wants "to make sure there's a pinch ... but I can't tell you how far we move from symbolic (action) to a place of really pinching hard."

However, neither a request for Californians to take action or even more heavy-handed moves would cause **Florida** to change its laws - nor would it hurt that state's economy, said Maurice Schweitzer, a professor at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

"I think for most consumers, they're not going to find it very compelling," Schweitzer

said. "There are many Californians that are frustrated today, but they're not frustrated with the state of **Florida** . ... When it comes time to make tough decisions to buy one product versus another or where they are going to vacation, consumers are not going to feel that strong pull."

Why they can workHe said boycotts can be effective, noting Cesar Chavez's leadership of a grape boycott but added that that it succeeded in large part because it was a local and broad-based movement.

"The producers, consumers and sellers, they were all touched by what he was doing," Schweitzer said.

Orange growers in **Florida** say Zimmerman's acquittal should have nothing to do with their industry.

"We do not have any idea why **Florida** citrus products are being brought into this discussion. We hope all of our customers will continue to enjoy **Florida** orange juice," Mike Sparks, executive vice president and CEO of **Florida** Citrus Mutual, said in a statement.

Florida tourism representatives, the governor's office and labor unions representing workers in that state's hotels and entertainment destinations could not be reached or did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

California lawWhile California officials may be outraged about the outcome of the Zimmerman trial, California has a law similar to **Florida** 's stand-your-ground rules, although it has been enforced by a long-standing court decree, not recent legislative action, as in **Florida** 's case.

The instructions given to California juries in self-defense cases state: "He or she is entitled to stand his or her ground and defend him or herself, and, if reasonably necessary, to pursue an assailant until the danger of death or great bodily injury has passed. This is so even if safety could have been achieved by retreating."

In **Florida** , however, a person claiming protection under the law receives a pretrial hearing where a judge can find that a defendant acted in self-defense without the case ever going to a jury.

And California, along with individual cities, recently tried to mount a boycott against another state with no clear outcome. State and local officials moved against Arizona in 2010 after it passed a controversial immigration law. That law made it a crime for an immigrant to be in Arizona without proof of legal U.S. residency, and directs law enforcement to stop and question individuals about their immigration status if they reasonably suspect they are there illegally.

Some cities, including Pasadena, where Holden was on the City Council, cut ties with

Arizona businesses and the state examined about $10.3 million in contracts with businesses in the Grand Canyon State. However, the effort never took off or was not sustained, and while the U.S. Supreme Court struck down part of the law, Arizona lawmakers have not repealed it.

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Assemblyman Chris Holden, D-Pasadena

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