

44TH HOUSE DISTRICT

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State Representative Joshua E. Williams Ohio House of Representatives

Chairman Hall, Vice-Chair Ferguson, Ranking Member Humphrey, and esteemed members of the House Government Oversight Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 42 today. For the past few years, the illegal immigration crisis has worsened to levels we have never seen before. With record numbers of illegal border crossings occurring, it has become clear that our government must act. As President Trump begins his second term and expands the federal government's focus on illegal immigration, the State of Ohio must do our part to combat this crisis and align with federal mandates.

Over time, incidences of illegal immigration to the United States have gone up. According to data from the Pew Research Center¹, there were only 3.5 million illegal immigrants residing in the U.S. in 1990. As of 2022, this number has increased by over 200% to 11 million total. Not only does this pose issues regarding the availability of essentials like employment, housing, and government resources, it also has a very large fiscal effect on federal, state, and local governments. In a 2023 cost study done by the Federation for American Immigration Reform², the cost incurred as a result of illegal immigration by federal, state, and local governments totaled almost \$151 billion. Needless to say, a cost of this magnitude deprives law-abiding

¹ <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/07/22/what-we-know-about-unauthorized-immigrants-living-in-the-us/>

² <https://www.fairus.org/issue/publications-resources/fiscal-burden-illegal-immigration-united-states-taxpayers-2023>

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Americans of much needed government resources and assistance. HB 42 is a step in the right direction for Ohio to do our part in reducing the impact of illegal immigration.

HB 42 requires various state agencies to collect and report data regarding the citizenship status of individuals they encounter. This applies to law enforcement agencies (municipal police, sheriffs, state highway patrol, etc.), the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, the Department of Education and Workforce (and each public school), county Departments of Job and Family Services, and the Department of Medicaid. For each entity, they must classify and summarize every detainee, inmate, student, or beneficiary as:

- Citizen or national of the United States
- Non-citizen or non-national of the United States who is lawfully present in the United States
- Unlawfully present in the United States

This data, compiled in a report and sent to the Attorney General's office, will provide a clear data set and depict the current landscape of illegal immigration in Ohio. Once these reports are complete, they will be sent to the Governor's office and ultimately presented to the General Assembly. This process, occurring yearly, will assist the General Assembly in lawmaking and policy efforts to curb illegal immigration and the effect it has on state funds and resources. Additionally, it will show temporal trends in the number of individuals in the state that are unlawfully present in the United States and the effect that legislation has on this number.

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By gathering this important data, Ohio will be a leader in the effort to reduce illegal immigration and become more equipped to reduce government waste and inefficiency. Chairman Hall, Vice-Chair Ferguson, Ranking Member Humphrey, and members of the Government Oversight Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 42, and I welcome any questions you may have.