

Testimony Opposing HB1

Dear Chair Abrams, Vice Chair Miller, Ranking Member Thomas and members of the House Public Safety Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Hao Cong. I am a U.S. citizen, a proud Ohioan for over 25 years, and a board member of the Asian American Coalition of Ohio.

I arrived in Ohio in 1998 on a full scholarship for graduate school and chose to make this state my home. Here, I built my life, purchased my first home, and raised my daughter, who is with me today. Ohio's welcoming and hardworking communities have always made me feel that I belong.

I'm here to respectfully urge you to vote **No** on House Bill 1. While I understand and share concerns about national security, I believe this bill could have unintended consequences that affect law-abiding individuals who contribute positively to our state.

Asian Americans have made significant economic contributions to Ohio. For instance, Asian American entrepreneurs in Ohio own over 18,000 businesses, employing more than 51,000 Americans and distributing nearly \$1.4 billion in payroll.

Legislation like HB1 could send a message that individuals of certain national origins are not welcome, despite their legal status and contributions. This not only affects those individuals but also the broader perception of our state's inclusivity and fairness.

I brought my daughter here today, on her 18th birthday, the first thing she did was register herself as a voter. Today, she can witness the democratic process and understand the importance of civic engagement. I believe in Ohio's commitment to justice and equal opportunity. As an active voter, I've supported both Republicans and Democrats—always choosing candidates who prioritize the well-being of our state, our country, and its people. I do not support those who promote division, racism, or undermine the fundamental values of our democracy.

I respectfully urge the House Public Safety Committee to consider the broader implications of HB1 and to vote NO on H.B. 1. Let's work together to ensure our policies reflect the values of fairness and inclusivity that make Ohio a great place to live.

Thank you for your time and consideration.