

Opponent Testimony for House Bill 1

Yanfen Yang

Testifying as Opponent

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

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

My name is Yanfen, I'd like to share some of my personal stories. My husband and I came to United States after we graduated from medical school in China. For nearly 20 years, my husband has worked extremely hard---working during the day and studying at night. In 2020, He was matched into a residency program and today, he is a pathologist, specializing in gastrointestinal and hematologic diseases.

I work as clinical research professional focused on developing immunotherapy strategies for cancer and childhood leukemia. My husband and I proudly became U.S. citizens a few years ago and last year. We are raising two loving and compassionate children with kind hearts and generous spirits.

Our family is just one examples of many families/people who immigrated from China and made Ohio their second home. They are professors, engineers, scientists, small business owners, and teachers..... I can't speak for everyone, while we may be quiet or reserved, we may not be perfect human beings, but I know the vast majority of the people in our community are kind, caring, extraordinarily hardworking people. We pay taxes, we raise our children to be good citizens, and we contribute every day to the growth of this state and this country. Yet too often, we are treated unfairly—judged simply by how we look or where we come from, because of bias and xenophobia. Sometimes, we are even seen as threats.

4 years ago, when covid-19 hit here, many times I woke up in the middle of the night from nightmares—dreams of being attacked or of my children being bullied. Lately, those fears have returned. Bills like HB1 and SB88 make me deeply worried. These proposals not only risk shattering the dreams of people hoping to build a life and raise a family in Ohio but also risk legitimizing discrimination against Chinese Americans and individuals from the countries listed in the bills. These bills send a message that people like us are not to be trusted—no matter how much we’ve worked, contributed, or sacrificed.

These bills will also harm Ohio’s future. They risk damaging the state’s reputation and discouraging talented people from settling here—or even driving them away. That would hurt Ohio’s economy and communities for years to come.

So I’m here to ask you: please vote **no**. Please don’t let fear and bias guide policy. Families like mine deserve to feel safe, valued, and included in the place we call home.

Thank you.