

Testimony Against House Bill 1
Submitted by: Junfang Grace Leng
Testifying as Opponent

May 18, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify against H.B. 1. My name is Junfang Grace Leng. I am a data scientist, a long-time Ohio resident, and an active community volunteer.

I came to the U.S. 21 years ago to pursue my Master's degree and have lived in Ohio ever since, contributing my technical expertise to the insurance industry. One of the efforts I'm most proud of was supporting data analysis for Ohio's 2023 Distracted Driving law—a law that's already saving lives and making our roads safer.

My son was born here 18 years ago. When he was 3, I bought our first home. That home provided him with the stability to thrive in school and allowed us to grow deep roots in our community. Over the years, my family and I have given back by volunteering at local events, cleaning public spaces, and helping elderly neighbors. In 2018, I became a U.S. citizen. But the 15 years it took to get there is typical for many immigrants like me.

Had H.B. 1 been in effect when I first came to Ohio, I wouldn't have been allowed to buy that home—not because of anything I did, but because of where I came from. This bill would have denied me and many others the opportunity to build a life and contribute to our communities. It equates individuals with the actions of foreign governments and punishes people solely based on national origin. That is discrimination, plain and simple.

Although I'm now a citizen, I stand in solidarity with my coworkers and friends—highly educated, law-abiding professionals on work visas or green cards—who would be directly impacted. They are essential to my company's success and to Ohio's economy. H.B. 1 would make it harder to recruit and retain global talent and would create unnecessary hardship for families who are already contributing members of our society.

If Ohio truly wants to become the Silicon Heartland, we must remain open and welcoming to global talent. H.B. 1 sends the opposite message—and will ultimately harm our economy and reputation.

I respectfully urge you to vote NO on H.B. 1. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Junfang Grace Leng