

Opponent Testimony for House Bill 1
Submitted by: Daniel Chen
Testifying as Opponent

Chair Abrams, Vice-Chair Miller, Ranking Member Thomas, and Members of the Ohio House Public Safety Committee.

My name is Daniel Chen, and I am a United States citizen who lives in New Albany. I am asking this committee to oppose House Bill 1.

I will begin by stating that I do not object to the legislation's goals of improving state and national security. However, I find HB1 to be overreaching and harmful to many communities in Ohio, especially regarding the national security problem it claims to address.

The proponents of this bill have likely presented you with statistics claiming the threat that is created by property ownership of foreign adversaries. Mentioned in the same report by the USDA Farm Service Agency that the supporters of Senate Bill 88 cite for their reasoning for that legislation, which is very similar to this bill, is that China, which I believe is foreign adversary of greatest concern to the state at the moment, only owns less than 1% of *foreign-owned* farmland in the United States, which is only an even smaller percentage of American land overall. This does not seem like a large issue, especially when compared to the over 50% of foreign land owned by just Canada, the Netherlands, Italy, and the United Kingdom.

While I can understand the concern of foreign businesses and larger entities of countries designated as "foreign adversaries" buying up large amounts of land from the United States, the bill also prohibits people such as green card holders, who are allowed to permanently live in the United States, from purchasing any property to reside in. The "critical infrastructure" that HB1 refers to is extremely wide-reaching and includes common structures such as telephone poles, railroads, and power lines, leaving very few, if any, reasonable properties for purchase for people looking to buy homes. Many of these individuals have no affiliation with the governments of the countries of concern. This blanket ban on people of certain nationalities with no regard for the individuals' situations unfairly targets the communities of people with those nationalities and violates the many forms of equal protection, such as the Fair Housing Act of 1968, that are also offered to immigrants who have legal status.

Therefore, I urge you to vote NO on House Bill 1 and consider an alternative approach to protecting Ohio's security and infrastructure, such as increasing the amount of oversight on existing infrastructures themselves.

