

## **Written Testimony on House Bill 1**

**May 17, 2025**

**Delin Shen**

Chair Abrams, Vice Chair Miller, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the House Public Safety Committee, thank you for allowing me to submit this written testimony on proposed House Bill 1 (HB 1). My name is Delin Shen. I am a registered Ohio voter and have worked in the insurance industry for 19 years.

I am writing to share my heartfelt concerns about House Bill 1, the Ohio Property Protection Act, which could unintentionally hinder the dreams of new immigrants seeking to build a life in Ohio. As an immigrant who has lived the American dream, I am grateful for the opportunities this country has provided me and fear that this bill may close doors for others based solely on their country of origin, which in turn will hurt the development and economy of Ohio.

### **A Heartfelt Gratitude**

I am deeply grateful to live in a nation founded on the principle of equal rights, as enshrined in the Constitution by our founding fathers. The United States is a beacon of hope, a place where people can pursue their dreams and happiness freely. Over twenty years ago, I arrived in the US as an international student, filled with ambition but uncertain of what lay ahead. Through decades of hard work, relentless study, and the kindness of countless Americans, I have achieved what once seemed impossible: I am now a US citizen, a homeowner in Ohio, and a proud parent raising a family here. Owning a home in Ohio symbolizes not just stability but my commitment to this community and country. I treasure these opportunities and hold them close to my heart, knowing they embody the essence of the American dream.

### **Fears for the Future**

Yet, I am afraid that House Bill 1 could cast a shadow over the aspirations of new immigrants, particularly those from countries designated as foreign adversaries. The bill seeks to prohibit certain governments, businesses, and individuals from these nations from purchasing “protected property,” such as agricultural land or properties within 25 miles of military installations or critical infrastructure. While I understand the intent to safeguard national security, I worry that this legislation may unfairly target legal immigrants—students, professionals, or residents—who have no ties to their governments but are judged solely by their birthplace, something they cannot choose or change.

This concern is not without precedent. During World War II, Japanese Americans faced unjust internment based on their ancestry, a dark chapter in our history that caused immense suffering. I fear that HB1 could lead to similar discrimination, where individuals from certain countries are assumed to have ill intentions without evidence, even if they are law-abiding, hardworking, and

respectful members of our communities. Such policies risk fostering an environment where people are judged by their skin color or country of origin, eroding the very values of equality and justice that make America exceptional.

## **The Vital Role of Immigrants**

Immigrants are integral to Ohio's prosperity. In 2022, immigrant households contributed \$7 billion in taxes, including \$2.4 billion in state and local taxes, and held \$18.6 billion in spending power, according to [a study by the American Immigration Council](#). By potentially discouraging talented individuals from settling in Ohio, HB1 could diminish the state's economic vitality and cultural diversity, which have long been sources of strength.

## **A Hope for Continued Opportunity**

My journey from an international student to an Ohio resident reflects the promise of the American dream—a promise that should be accessible to all who work hard and contribute to our society. I hope that Ohio remains a welcoming home for those facing challenges in other countries, just as it has been for me. While national security is paramount, I urge you to consider more targeted measures, such as enhanced background checks or specific risk assessments, that protect our state without broadly restricting immigrants based on their nationality.

House Bill 1 risks sending a message that Ohio is not open to all, which could deter the next generation of innovators, workers, and community members. I respectfully ask you to reconsider the bill's approach and ensure that our policies reflect America's core values of fairness, equality, and opportunity for all.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Delin Shen

Ohio Resident