

The Honorable Chair Roegner, Vice-Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear, and Distinguished Members of the Ohio Senate General Government Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to address you today in strong opposition to Senate Bill 88. My name is Echo Zhang, a resident of Hamilton County and a seminary instructor. I appear before you as both a faith leader and a concerned resident deeply troubled by the implications of this legislation.

SB 88 is fundamentally at odds with both our nation's constitutional principles and the moral values I hold as a person of faith. The bill's restrictions on property ownership for Chinese nationals—including lawful permanent residents and visa holders—constitute a dangerous precedent of discrimination based on national origin. Moreover, its unintended consequences could extend to naturalized U.S. citizens of Chinese descent, many of whom once navigated the same immigration pathways this bill seeks to obstruct. Such policies undermine the very ideals of due process and equal protection enshrined in our laws.

Beyond these ethical and legal concerns, SB 88 would inflict tangible harm on Ohio's economy and global competitiveness. Chinese immigrants and scholars contribute significantly to our state's universities, research institutions, and industries—from advanced manufacturing to healthcare. Driving away this talent pool through punitive housing restrictions would weaken Ohio's innovation capacity and economic growth at a time when we can least afford it.

I urge this committee to consider the broader ramifications of this bill and reject legislation that scapegoats immigrant communities while offering no discernible benefit to Ohioans. Thank you for your time and thoughtful deliberation on this critical matter.

Respectfully submitted,
Echo Zhang