

Testimony Against Senate Bill 88
Submitted by: Melody Miao
Testifying as Opponent

May 24, 2025

Chair Roegner, Vice-Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear, and members of the Senate General Government Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to Senate Bill 88. I am Melody Miao, an Oxford resident and upcoming junior in high school.

I have lived my entire life fearing I wasn't American enough. That because of the color of my skin, I didn't belong to the majority, didn't understand what it meant to be "American," didn't embody traditional American values. But with S.B. 88 being seriously considered by elected people who *are* supposed to represent those values, I can't help but wonder: how are we so blind to the foundations of our nation crumbling right beneath our feet?

Maybe it's in our nature to look away. We avert our eyes when confronted by our history. We shield ourselves from the reality of injustice in our governments, *because we know*, deep down, that we have failed to uphold what once made the United States of America a bright, extraordinary dream—unyielding freedom, strength, and courage.

Time and time again, we fall into the same cycle—study our history textbooks, condemn our failures, then repeatedly walk down the exact same roads.

But *right now* is tomorrow's history. This moment—this very decision—is a moment in history our children will look back on. Maybe they will sit in their classrooms, years from now, and ask their teachers why we allowed so many to suffer under the guise of national security. Maybe they will wonder why we continued the very cycle we promised to break, and it *cannot* be in our nature to be the generation that writes yet another chapter of shame for the future.

Because this is not just about Senate Bill 88. This downward spiral will not stop at one or two bills. This is about who we choose to be while history is watching us in horror. This is about whether we will finally rise to the promise carved in our founding documents.

For Ohio. For the dream that refuses to die, no matter how many times we've tried to extinguish the flames. I am ashamed of the current state of America—ashamed that I even have to question whether some of my neighbors deserve the same dignity as others. But I will never—*never*—be ashamed to call myself a true American—one that stands for real justice. For America.

I respectfully urge the Senate General Government Committee to consider my testimony and to vote NO on S.B. 88, because it stands not for democracy, but for the very injustice we were created to resist. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Melody Miao