

Testimony Against Senate Bill 88
Submitted by: Haiyang Ai, Ph.D
Testifying as Opponent

May 24, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify against Senate Bill 88! My name is Haiyang Ai, and I am a Cincinnati resident and an Associate Professor of Literacy and Second Language Studies at the University of Cincinnati.

My wife, our two children, and I have been living in Ohio since 2015. We have been getting along well with our colleagues and neighbors who we consider as our friends, and we try our best to contribute to our communities. It is going to be devastating for our family if we must sell our home which we have been living in for 8 years and leave our community. We do not know how to explain to my children, who are both American citizens, why we have to do so. In particular, my 6-year-old daughter was discussing with us the vital contributions of Chinese and other immigrants throughout the history of the United States after her social science class. We always teach our children that contributions should be acknowledged and appreciated, not hidden or ignored; contributors should be supported and encouraged, not wronged or punished. The legislation should shoulder the same responsibility. S.B. 88 is a severe punishment to Chinese nationals who are contributors to the U.S.

S.B.88 is discriminatory—they target Chinese nationals, even permanent residents, and violate basic property rights under the Fair Housing Act. S.B.88 “expands the prohibition to other “protected property” that is located within 25 miles of a military installation or critical infrastructure facility”. According to a financial analysis from the Ohio Legislative Service Commission, “few if any areas of the state would not be within 25 miles for one or the other of these types of properties”. This means Chinese nationals categorically cannot own properties in Ohio.

S.B.88 will harm Ohio’s diverse communities, force families to sell their homes, and damage local businesses and cultural institutions. President J. F. Kennedy has said that “Everywhere immigrants have enriched and strengthened the fabric of American life.” The bill should not treat those who have been working hard to contribute to the US as “enemies”.

I respectfully urge you to consider my testimony and to vote against S.B. 88. Thank you again for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Haiyang Ai

Haiyang Ai, Ph.D.
School of Education
College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services
University of Cincinnati