

Testimony Against S.B. 88
Submitted by: The Chinese Association of Greater Toledo
Testifying as Opponents

May 24, 2025

Dear 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. We are members of the Chinese community in the Greater Toledo area who came to the U.S. decades ago seeking educational and economic opportunities. We chose America and Ohio as our home because we believed in its ideals of freedom, fairness, and opportunity—not handouts. Through hard work and dedication, we have contributed significantly to our communities in the Greater Toledo area and the state of Ohio in education, science, business, healthcare, and military service. Among us are university professors educating the next generation at institutions like the University of Toledo and Bowling Green State University; researchers advancing medical science and technology in both academic and private labs; engineers and skilled workers supporting critical industries such as automotive manufacturing, renewable energy, and infrastructure; and doctors, nurses, and healthcare professionals providing vital patient care in local hospitals and clinics. Our presence strengthens Ohio's economy, workforce, and innovation—and we take pride in being active, contributing members of the communities we call home.

Though we have typically let our actions speak for themselves, SB88 compels us to remind lawmakers of the legacy and ongoing contributions of Chinese immigrants in building this nation—from the Transcontinental Railroad to advancements in science and public service. We gave our labor, intellect, and lives to this country and Ohio state. To now face discriminatory legislation like SB88, which echoes the injustice of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, is deeply hurtful.

Many of us remain legal immigrants, not due to a lack of loyalty, but out of love and duty to our parents abroad. Immigration restrictions make it difficult for us to travel during family emergencies. Our status does not lessen our commitment to this country. SB88's attempt to single us out is unjust.

To deny legal immigrants—including green card holders and those on H1-B, J1, and F1 visas—the right to own property is a violation of basic human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of which the U.S. was a key author, affirms the right to property for all. SB88, by targeting immigrants based on national origin, violates both American democratic values and international human rights standards.

According to the 2022 Annual Business Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, there are over **9,500 Asian American-owned businesses with paid employees in Ohio**, many of which are Chinese-owned. These businesses employ nearly **97,600 workers** and contribute an annual

payroll of approximately **\$3.3 billion**. In total, the Ohio Development Services Agency reports more than **21,000 Asian American-owned businesses** across the state, generating over **\$11 billion in revenue** and providing **64,000 jobs**. These businesses are especially strong in sectors like accommodation, food services, healthcare, retail, and technology. In cities like Toledo, Columbus, and Cleveland, Asian-owned enterprises are key to local economic growth and job creation. SB88 threatens these vital contributions by unfairly targeting legal immigrants—many of whom are the founders, investors, and operators of these successful businesses. Undermining their ability to own property or invest in Ohio not only jeopardizes their future, but also risks harming the state's broader economy.

When you swore your oaths of office, you committed to representing all Ohioans, including us. We are not asking for special treatment—only dignity and fairness. Please don't make us scapegoats in a political struggle between nations. As history shows, immigrants have always helped build and strengthen America.

We close with a simple proverb: "Don't bite the hand that feeds you." We, Chinese immigrants in Ohio, have given our labor and loyalty to this state. In return, we ask only for fair and humane treatment.

We respectfully urge the you to vote NO on SB88. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
The Chinese Association of Greater Toledo