

Opponent Testimony for Senate Bill 88
Submitted by: SongTao Liu
Testifying as Opponent

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear and Members of the Senate General Government Committee:

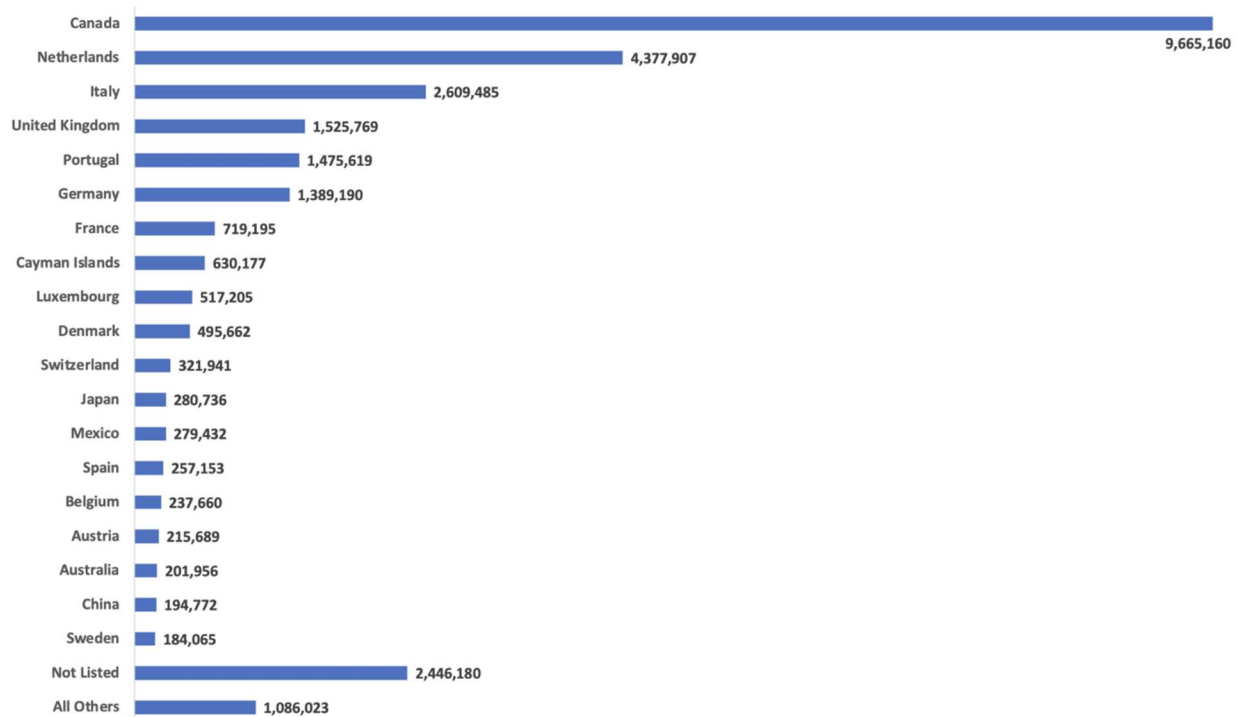
I am writing to express grave concerns about OH-SB88, which is under consideration in your committee. My name is SongTao Liu. I am a first generation immigrant and currently a US citizen. I am a Professor at the University of Toledo, and have lived in Sylvania, Ohio in the past 18 years. I actually purchased my home when I was still a permanent resident.

The SB88 and HB1 are supposed to target foreign adversaries including China. According to FBI, "To be clear, the adversary is not the Chinese people or people of Chinese descent or heritage."

(<https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/counterintelligence/the-china-threat>).

However, the SB88 and HB1 specifically target individuals or businesses based on nation of origin including all law-abiding permanent residents and legal visa holders. The proposed Bill explicitly precludes the above mentioned people to acquire even residential properties within the 25 mile radius of any "critical infrastructure facility", and also plans to force people to disown their properties. Due to the all-ranging definition of "critical infrastructure facility", this would essentially bar any ownership of property of the affected people in the entire Ohio. In other words, if I were to keep my permanent residency, I most likely would also have to sell my home when the bill passed.

Ohio was and is still known for its Midwestern style hospitality to all guests. Why do we have to scare ourselves now to become a leader in the hating campaign? Ohio was the state to produce Presidents and strategists. Why are we going to become so near-sighted and narrow-minded? A simple internet search also found the following figure depicting total acres of foreign-owned land by country of origin in 2021 (from <https://cap.unl.edu/news/do-only-americans-own-america-foreign-investment-agricultural-lands-united-states/#:~:text=This%20amounts%20to%203.1%25%20of,this%20list%20at%20194%2C772%20acres>)



If the committee really concerns about foreign owned properties in Ohio, should you focus on investigating that the top ranking countries in the above figure did NOT cause any negative impact on the local housing market or agriculture land?

As you know, there are many faculty, staff, and students originally from foreign countries now living in the Sylvania and Toledo area because of the appeal of Lourdes University and the University of Toledo. Some students stayed on and started businesses in the area after graduation. Many employees of First Solar, Owens-Illinois and other big companies in our area came from China but now resided in the Sylvania and other nearby townships. They play pivotal roles in the economic development of our area. If there is anything Ohio needs to do to maintain its competitive edge in the era of new economy, some policy should be in place to attract these talents to stay and invest in this area and in Ohio. Why do we want to alienate all these current and potential residents and businesses that have benefited and will benefit Ohio's economic development? Since when the Ohioans have become so less confident and even hostile to the legal newcomers? Is the proposed Bill addressing or creating an issue of national security?

I urge you to vote NO on Senate Bill 88 to ensure Ohio remains a welcoming state for all its residents. Thank you for your time.