

May 26th, 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 in opposition to Senate Bill 88. My name is Mei Zhang. I am an employee at a fortune 500 company in Perrysburg, Ohio. I currently serve as a transitioning Planning Manager at our Research & Development Center.

In my team, three out of five members are immigrants. This small group reflects the broader culture of First Solar, which in turn reflects the diversity of America itself. Immigrants are a vital part of this nation's identity—bringing with them diverse cultures, skills, and perspectives that have helped drive innovation, power economic growth, and shape American society. Their resilience and dedication continue to enrich and strengthen the very fabric of the United States, embodying its core values of opportunity and inclusion.

However, Senate Bill 88—the “Ohio Property Protection Act”—has raised significant concerns for many in our immigrant communities, including those on legal work visas and lawful permanent residents. The bill seeks to restrict property ownership for individuals from countries designated as “foreign adversaries” by the U.S. government, including China, where I was born. Most troubling, the bill requires affected individuals to divest their property within two years, even if they are lawful permanent residents who have followed every legal requirement to live and contribute to our society.

This legislation unfairly targets people based solely on national origin, undermining the rights of those who have built lives, careers, and families here in Ohio. In doing so, it raises serious constitutional concerns:

Equal Protection Clause (Fourteenth Amendment)

By singling out individuals based on national origin, SB88 may violate the Equal Protection Clause. Such classifications are subject to strict scrutiny and must be justified by a compelling governmental interest, using the least restrictive means. The bill's broad scope and lack of individualized assessments fall short of that standard.

Takings Clause (Fifth Amendment)

Requiring divestment of property without just compensation could amount to an unconstitutional taking. The Fifth Amendment prohibits the government from taking private

property for public use without fair compensation. If this bill results in uncompensated loss of property, it could be vulnerable to legal challenge.

In essence, Senate Bill 88 ties property rights not to an individual's conduct, legal status, or contributions to society, but rather to their country of origin. It undermines the foundational principle of equal treatment under the law and disproportionately harms immigrants who have done everything right—people like me, who have chosen to make Ohio our home.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to reject SB88 in its entirety. Legislation like this does not reflect the inclusive spirit or best interests of Ohio. Instead, let us pursue policies that ensure our security through unity, drive economic growth through global collaboration, and uphold justice through equal protection for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mei Zhang", with a stylized, flowing script.

Mei Zhang

Perrysburg, Ohio