

Testimony **Against** Senate Bill 88

Submitted by: Zhiguo Xie
Testifying as Opponent
May 26, 2025

Dear Ohio Senate General Government Committee:

My name is Zhiguo Xie, and I am a resident in Delaware County. I have been serving on Ohio State's faculty for 14 years and counting. But today I am speaking in front of this committee as a concerned citizen. I would like to start this testimony with a story. A couple months ago, during a weekend getaway my family stopped at an interstate rest area. My 7-year-old son suddenly asked: "Daddy, what is 'The Heart of it All'?" He was pointing to a sign. I said: "It is Ohio's slogan." Though my son didn't press me for more, I asked myself in the head: "Is it just a slogan?" In a few seconds I continued: "It means Ohio has a loving heart. It is the most beautiful place for everyone to visit and to live." You should see my son's beaming face after hearing this!

If my son asked me the same question today, in this despicable context of SB 88, what would my answer be? What would YOUR answer be? I would say "The Heart of It All" is Ohio's aspiration, it is Ohio's spirit, it is the very self of Ohio. What is Ohio? What is O-H-I-O, the four most beautiful letters put together? Ohio means "The Big River." Ohio is BIG. It is bigger than me, bigger than you, bigger than the people in this room, bigger than any political factions, bigger than whatever party you might be from! Ohio is everyone in Ohio. Whether you are visiting here for just a day, whether you are studying in one of Ohio's colleges, whether you are an immigrant calling Ohio home, or whether you are a life-long resident on this Buckeye land, Ohio is for you, and Ohio is YOU! Ohio is each and every one of us! Ohio has the most loving heart to make the best out of all of us, and for all of us!

Is SB 88 Ohio? Ask this question to your kids, your nephews, your nieces, and your grandkids, and see what they will answer! Ask this question to your neighbors, to people outside of your comfort zone, to people outside of your political circle, and to your God if you have one, and see what they will answer!

SB 88 is anything but Ohio! It is political bigotry: It is the privileged few telling the rest what they are allowed to do and not allowed to do, merely on the ground of their origin. SB 88 is all hatred: Under the guise of fighting "foreign adversaries," it is a bill of domestic coercion and division. Nobody – probably except for the privileged few – should or will feel safe under SB 88, because nobody will be safe! Today it is targeting people with origins from a small number of countries including China. Tomorrow, it could target people of Indian, Mexican, Somalian,

Filipino, Italian, or Native American origins. Tomorrow, it could target anyone as long as the privileged few do not like you and create you a label!

So, no matter who you are or where you are from, ask yourself: Do I see a safe, loving, and bright future for myself and my kids in Ohio? More importantly, ask yourself: "What should I do to make a safe, loving, and bright future for myself and my kids in Ohio?" Both history and future will remember what we do:

Say NO to SB 88! Vote NO on SB 88!

Thank you!

Sincerely,
Zhiguo Xie