

Date: May 25, 2025

To Members of the Ohio State Legislature,  
Dear Members,

I am a proud graduate of The Ohio State University and a lawful H-1B visa holder, currently living and working in Ohio as a professional copywriter. I have called this state home for nearly sixteen years since I came here for graduate study in 2009. Like many immigrants, I work hard, pay taxes, and contribute to my community every day. But now, simply because of my nationality, bills like HB 1 and SB 88 threaten to strip away my basic right to put down roots in the very place I've helped build. I write to you today not just with concern — but with outrage.

These bills, under the guise of “national security,” target individuals from countries like China and seek to prevent us from buying property in Ohio. Let me be clear: these laws are discriminatory. They do not protect this state — they shame it. They send a chilling message to every legal immigrant, every foreign student, every worker on a visa: you are not welcome, no matter how much you give, no matter how long you've been here.

H-1B visa holders are not a threat to Ohio — we are essential to its growth. We are the engineers building your infrastructure, the researchers advancing your medicine, the educators teaching your children, and the professionals keeping your businesses running. Ohio's universities and industries rely heavily on international talent. To turn around and tell us that we are too “foreign” to own a home here is both deeply offensive and dangerously short-sighted.

I will never forget my first encounter with discrimination in this country. During my first year at OSU, while working alone in an office as a graduate teaching assistant, a Caucasian male colleague warned me: “Don't steal anything while you're in there.” I was stunned. Despite being selected from a global pool of top students and awarded a full scholarship, I was seen as a potential thief — not because of who I am, but because of where I come from. That moment exposed a painful truth: prejudice doesn't always shout — sometimes, it whispers in policy.

Now, this prejudice threatens to be written into law. And not only will it harm people like me — it will hurt our children. Many of us H-1B visa holders are raising families here. Our kids go to school with yours, play on the same teams, and dream of the same futures. Some of them were born here — they are American citizens.

What message will this country send to our American-born children if it tells their parents: you may live here, work here, pay taxes here — but you are not allowed to own a home?

This is not a small or symbolic matter. Homeownership is one of the most fundamental paths to stability, dignity, and generational opportunity in the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, over 65% of Americans are homeowners. Yet if these bills pass, families like mine will be denied this right based solely on our national origin — not our behavior, not our legal status, not our contributions.

What will our children think when they realize their parents — who work alongside others, attend PTA meetings, volunteer in their schools, and pay the same property taxes — are still considered “too foreign” to own a piece of the community they help sustain? What kind of civic identity can grow in a child who learns that their family, despite playing by every rule, is written out of the American promise?

These bills don’t just shut us out — they codify exclusion. And our children will feel it. They will grow up asking, Why are we treated differently? What did we do wrong? Do we really belong here?

Policies like HB 1 and SB 88 don’t just harm today’s immigrants. They fracture the next generation’s faith in the country they were born to. That is not just un-American — it is unforgivable.

I urge you — vote NO on HB 1 and SB 88. Choose fairness over fear. Choose progress over prejudice. Choose a future where every person who contributes to Ohio has the right to call it home.

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