

Opponent Testimony for Senate Bill 88

Submitted by: Xiaoyan Zhang

Testifying as Opponent

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear, and esteemed members of the Senate General Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak.

I respectfully submit this testimony to express my opposition to Senate Bill 88, which seeks to prohibit property ownership by nationals from China, Russia, and Iran. While national security is a paramount concern, this bill unjustly targets legal immigrants and U.S. citizens based on their national origin, leading to several detrimental effects:

1. Violation of Equal Protection Rights

The bill discriminates against legal immigrants and U.S. citizens from these countries, infringing upon their constitutional right to equal protection under the law. Such broad restrictions have been challenged and blocked in other states for violating civil rights protections.

2. Economic Harm and Unintended Consequences

Legal immigrants contribute significantly to Ohio's economy, including investments in real estate and local businesses. Prohibiting property ownership could deter international talent and investment, potentially leading to job losses and economic downturns.

3. Promotion of Xenophobia and Racial Profiling

The bill fosters an environment of suspicion and hostility towards individuals based on their national origin, rather than their actions or affiliations. This approach mirrors discriminatory practices seen in other states and undermines Ohio's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

4. Legal and Administrative Challenges

Implementing such a sweeping ban would require extensive resources to enforce and could lead to numerous legal challenges, potentially resulting in costly litigation and a diversion of state resources.

Conclusion

While national security concerns are valid, Senate Bill 88 addresses these issues in a manner that unjustly penalizes legal immigrants and U.S. citizens from China, Russia, and Iran. I urge the committee to reconsider this legislation and seek more targeted, fair, and effective solutions to safeguard Ohio's interests without infringing upon the rights of its residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Xiaoyan Zhang