

Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 88

Submitted by: (Huameng Li)

Testifying as Opponent

May 24, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 88.

My name is Huameng Li. I am a resident of Dublin, Ohio, a Senior Lead Software Engineer, and a Vice President with one of the largest employers in Columbus. My wife and I are proud, naturalized United States citizens. We have been residents of Ohio for 26 years, contributing to its communities and its economy. We purchased our first home in Westerville, Ohio, in 2000 while on H1B status (with Employment Authorization Documents) and have been dedicated Ohio and federal taxpayers for over two and a half decades. As immigrants from China who have become US citizens, we have strived to contribute significantly to Ohio's economy and tax revenue throughout our journey from H1B visas to Green Cards, and ultimately, to citizenship.

We strongly oppose Senate Bill 88 for the following reasons:

1. **Lack of Evidence for Public Safety Concerns:** There is no evidence to suggest that H1B visa or Green Card holders of Chinese origin who own homes in Ohio pose a public safety risk. All individuals holding H1B visas and Green Cards have already undergone thorough background checks and security scrutiny by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). This bill appears to cast unwarranted suspicion on a group of people who have already been vetted by federal government agencies.
2. **Negative Impact on Ohio's Economy and Welcoming Environment:** Senate Bill 88 has the potential to negatively impact Ohio's economy. Restricting the ability of lawful residents, such as those on H1B visas and Green Cards from specific countries of origin, to purchase residential property can deter highly skilled workers and valuable members of our communities from settling and investing in Ohio. This can create an unwelcoming environment, diminishing Ohio's attractiveness to global talent and investment. While

the bill may specify certain types of property, the message it sends can have a broader chilling effect.

3. **Deep Concerns Regarding Racial Profiling and Discrimination:** We are profoundly concerned that this bill will lead to racial profiling and discrimination against immigrants of Chinese origin, including those who are here legally, working, paying taxes, and contributing to our state. Legislation that targets specific nationalities in property ownership harkens back to discriminatory practices of the past and risks fostering a climate of suspicion and hostility against valued members of our Ohio community.

As long-standing Ohioans who have built our lives here and contributed to this state, we believe this bill is misguided and contrary to the values of fairness and equal opportunity.

I respectfully urge you to consider the significant contributions of immigrants to Ohio and to vote NO on S.B. 88. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Huameng Li, PhD

Dublin, Ohio