

Dear Members of the Ohio State Legislature,

I respectfully submit this testimony to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 88.

My name is Wenhui Xiao. I am an immigrant, a taxpayer, a parent, a professional, and a resident of Ohio. I have built a life here, contributed meaningfully to this community, and developed a deep love for this state. Senate Bill 88 is, in my view, profoundly misguided and deeply troubling.

1. SB88 Is Rooted in Fear and Prejudice

Senate Bill 88 is not a measure designed to enhance public safety or strengthen our state. Rather, it is based on suspicion and exclusion. It singles out immigrants—not for their actions, but solely for their national origin. This approach is not only discriminatory; it is also historically regressive and morally indefensible.

The bill evokes painful parallels to exclusionary laws of the past, including the Chinese Exclusion Act and the internment of Japanese Americans. These were policies rooted in fear and bias, not justice or truth. SB88 continues in that same spirit of exclusion.

2. The Legislation Is Driven by Fear—But of What, Exactly?

As President Franklin D. Roosevelt wisely observed, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

SB88 is legislation born out of fear. But what exactly is the fear? Is it fear of individuals like myself owning a home? Of our children attending local schools? Of immigrants paying taxes and building lives as neighbors and community members?

This bill does not address real security threats. It will not safeguard military installations or protect critical infrastructure. What it will do is deter investment, alienate valuable talent, and create deep societal division. It sends an unmistakable message: that regardless of lawful presence, contribution, or commitment, immigrants are perpetually suspect.

This is not the legacy Ohio should choose. It is not the message we ought to send to future generations.

3. Ohio's Strength Lies in Unity, Not Division

The United States is a nation of immigrants. Ohio, too, is a state built by generations who arrived from elsewhere—some long ago, some recently. What unites us is not the date of our arrival but our shared values and love for this state.

Immigrants teach in our schools, serve in our hospitals, and contribute to our local economies. We are not outsiders—we are Ohioans.

To use ancestry or language as grounds for exclusion is a betrayal of American ideals. Such practices degrade our civic fabric and moral standing.

4. A Call for Compassion and Justice

In Psalm 84, the psalmist writes:

"Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may have her young—a place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God."

This powerful image reminds us that even the most vulnerable creatures deserve a place to belong. If the house of God can offer shelter to birds, surely our laws can offer fairness and dignity to people.

Let Ohio be that refuge. Let us not fortify barriers but open doors.

Conclusion

Senate Bill 88 does not reflect the values or aspirations of our state. It is grounded in fear, not fact—in exclusion, not unity.

I urge you to reject SB88. Choose inclusion over division, reason over fear, and justice over prejudice.

We are the United States of America—not the Divided States. In unity, there is strength.

Thank you for your time and consideration.