

February 6th, 2024

Bill Number: SB446

Opponent Testimony

Emily Zhang

Self

Charman Thompson and Honorable Members of the Committee,

As a legal resident of Kansas and a realtor who has assisted numerous homebuyers in Kansas, I wish to voice my significant concerns regarding SB446, a bill that imposes sweeping restrictions on real estate ownership for individuals from foreign countries and fails to consider the complexities of immigration statuses, particularly for individuals holding working and student visas. This legislation undermines fundamental principles of fairness, justice, and non-discrimination. All individuals, regardless of their citizenship status, should be afforded equal rights and opportunities in our society. By singling out foreign nationals and limiting their property ownership rights, we perpetuate harmful stereotypes and create divisions within our communities.

Moreover, foreign nationals make significant contributions to Kansas's economy and workforce. Many of these individuals are lawful residents who work, pay taxes, and contribute to the vitality of our state. Restricting their ability to purchase property not only discriminates against them but also hampers economic growth and job creation in Kansas.

Furthermore, homeownership transcends mere financial investment; it represents a fundamental pillar of stability and security for families. By denying non-permanent resident foreign nationals the equal opportunity to own property, we deprive them of the chance to lay down roots and forge a future for themselves and their families in our state. Additionally, imposing a restriction of three acres is unreasonable. If the concern is excessive foreign ownership of agricultural land, a more rational approach would be to adjust the restriction to parcels of 10 acres or less, or alternatively, to limit the purchase of agricultural land altogether.

Instead of erecting barriers, we should strive to create an inclusive and welcoming environment where all individuals, regardless of nationality, can thrive and contribute to the prosperity of our state.

In conclusion, I propose a more focused strategy within SB446, one that distinguishes between legitimate security considerations and the valuable contributions made by foreign nationals residing in Kansas on work or study visa

Thank you for considering my testimony on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Emily Zhang