

**HB 525 TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 525
OHIO MOTION PICTURE TAX CREDIT**

**PRESENTED BY IVAN SCHWARZ
PRESIDENT, GREATER CLEVELAND FILM COMMISSION
13 MARCH 2018**

Mr. Chairman Blessing and Committee Members:

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Ivan Schwarz and I am here today to testify as a Proponent for HB 525. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on the matter of continuing to create a media industry in the State of Ohio. Since 2009, we have proven that Ohio is an extremely desirable place for filmmakers to create content. Now we need to take it to the next level by establishing a year-round industry and building permanent infrastructure. This bill will encourage Ohio businesses to grow and attract new businesses to Ohio; it will keep young people from leaving the state seeking employment elsewhere and attract new people to move here to work in this new industry. Simply put, House Bill 525 will create more jobs and promote more economic development across the entire state of Ohio.

Here are some facts and figures:

- We have successfully created a new stand-alone film school at Cleveland State University. It officially opens in August 2018 but since its announcement enrollment has increased by 50%.
- The Ohio Motion Picture Tax Incentive returns \$2.01 into the Ohio's economy for every \$1 invested by the tax incentive.
- Since 2009 we have seen 4,162 direct jobs in Ohio. Without the Incentive those

jobs would have gone to another state.

- The State of Ohio has lost over a Billion Dollars in production that would have filmed here if the incentive were higher and if we had infrastructure in place, i.e. media studios.
- Since passage of the Ohio Motion Picture Tax Credit in 2009, media production has brought in over \$572 million in economic impact to the state.
- In 2017, 15 productions filmed here in Northeast Ohio including:
 - Matthew McConaughey's "White Boy Rick,"
 - Bruce Willis' "Acts of Violence,"
 - Sylvester Stallone's "Escape Plan 3,"
 - NBC Universal's "American Ninja Warrior,"
 - "Them That Follow,"
 - Commercials, including Honda, Adidas, Nike, Beats, Ohio Lottery and VH-1.
- Ohio's incentive needs to be competitive to be effective. Our neighboring states - including Michigan and Pennsylvania - currently have higher caps in their tax incentive programs. This bill will help Ohio remain competitive in attracting production work to the state.

In conclusion, a strong film industry is good for Ohio. A strong Ohio film industry can help retain Ohio's young talent in large numbers and create jobs for them right here at home. A strong Ohio film industry can provide retraining opportunities and jobs for displaced workers impacted by recent economic challenges. A strong Ohio film industry will bring new businesses and with them new job opportunities for Ohioans. A strong Ohio film industry is good for Ohio. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for the opportunity to speak to you today in support/opposition/as an interested party. I am available to answer any questions you may have.

