



May 16, 2023

Chairman Blessing, Vice Chair Roegner, Ranking Member Smith and members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on Senate Bill 4. My name is John Daugherty, and I am the Director of Film Columbus and Film Commissioner for Columbus and the central Ohio area.

Film Columbus was formed to promote the city of Columbus and the State of Ohio as a filmmaking destination. Film Columbus is redefining what the film industry is as we see opportunities in all areas of entertainment including film, animation, game development, and distribution.

Currently, Ohio has a motion picture tax credit cap of \$40 million a year. This cap became an issue last year when an Adam Driver movie titled White Noise was filmed in Ohio. While having a high-profile, high-budget film like White Noise has its advantages, it ate up the entire tax credit. Ohio lost out on over \$200 million dollars given that other entities who applied for the credit were rejected due to lack of funding.

I believe strongly in seeing productions and brick and mortar spread throughout the entire state. I scouted in Belmont County last year for a film called Unikorn directed by Debbie Berman, best known for her film Black Panther. That project had to look elsewhere due to the uncertainty of the current Ohio Motion Picture Tax Credit (OMPTC).

Shawnee State University has one of the best game development programs in the country. The game industry is now three times larger than film and music combined. SB4 could bring some of those game developers to Ohio. Studios and production companies are looking at new game developers for intellectual property (IP) such as characters and storylines. As Marvel continues to run out of ideas, Ohio could be a developers dreamland for film, game development, and animation creators.

There are over 20 colleges and universities around Ohio with programs in the industry. We must provide opportunity for those students to stay in Ohio. SB4 would certainly help alleviate that brain drain.

States around the country have motion picture tax credit caps that are above \$40 million, while states like Georgia have no cap at all. Georgia saw an explosion of projects, subsequent investments and economic impact after removing the cap. Senate Bill 4 would provide similar results in Ohio.



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Critics point to the perception of a low return on investment for the state and are seen as a short-term infusion without a lasting impact on the local economy. What is often overseen is the domino effect it has on the community for immediate and long-term investment. With the passage of Senate Bill 4, we predict an influx of activity around brick-and-mortar construction of facilities used in the production of film. Further, film production would help local businesses throughout Ohio. The potential for hundreds, even thousands, of jobs is very real.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for your time today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have via email.

Sincerley,

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