

## Testimony – 5.24.23 – Nick Kellis

Chair Blessing, Vice Chair Roegner, Ranking Member Smith, members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee, my name is Nick Kellis and I represent a Lima New Technology Media Facility initiative; I'm here today to testify as a proponent to SB 4.

I was raised in Lima Ohio, graduated from The Ohio State University and spent over 20 years working in the Hollywood film and TV industry. I produced over 100 hours of nationally broadcast, unscripted television (including *LA Ink*, *Clean House*, *Bridezillas*), and wrote, produced and directed the feature film *A Walk With Grace* in President Huffman's home town Lima, that can be seen on Amazon Prime. I've also received funding multiple times from the Ohio Arts Council to mentor a diverse sampling of Lima Allen County students, grades 6 thru 12, in the filmmaking arts.

My interest in SB. 4 is two-fold. First, to support a slate of on-going filmmaking projects in the same niche as my holiday/Hallmark style film *A Walk With Grace*, which contributed over \$100K to the local community, out of a \$500K budget. The film slate I'm working to set up would include up to 6 films per year, each in the \$500K to \$1 million range.

Then, the incentives outlined in S.B. 4 would prove crucial to potential investors, for a sizeable capital investment in a media-focused, new technology facility in Lima, that would service the region for a variety of projects and sustainable revenue streams over the long-term.

The incentives proposed in SB 4 - not only regarding the essential transferable tax credit, but also subsidizing the building of a diverse workforce - are key to both of my initiatives.

We've worked with President Huffman and his staff over the last year, and he's been cooperative and supportive, provided our go-forward fulfills the metrics presented in S.B. 4.

For the capital investment project, our goal is to create a sustainable media and technology hub in Lima with an eye towards expansion. It is our belief that Ohio is an untapped resource centrally located in the nation's heartland. Ohio has a young and ambitious population that I've found typically feels it's necessary to leave the state to find better opportunities.

We believe with the right deployment of capital to create the right opportunities, we can keep intelligent, educated, hard-working people in the state to help build a stronger workforce base in Ohio. What I'm working to bring to Lima, and the state, leverages smart tax credits to build something sustainable. Lima is my home-town, and I'm proud and excited to bring contacts and resources from over 20 years spent in the Hollywood film and TV industry back home (like my friend Jeff Forsyth, who will testify next).

I returned to Lima in 2010, to be closer to family, but also the values that make the most sense to me. But I also am a professional film and media-maker and have worked these 13 years to bring to Ohio those opportunities formerly reserved for Los Angeles. This is my home, and the stakes are real for me, to help build something that will be here to stay.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for the opportunity to speak to you today in support of SB 4. I am available to answer any questions you may have.