

**Written Testimony of Kristen Schlotman on behalf of
Greater Cincinnati Film Commission
Senate Finance Committee
Am. Sub. H.B. 96
June 6, 2025**

Chairman Cirino, Vice Chairman Chavez and Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson. Thank you for allowing us to submit this Interested Party testimony on Am. Sub. H.B. 96 and the changes reflected in the sub-bill accepted this week. First, we would like to again thank the General Assembly for its continued support for the film industry and its workforce here in Ohio.

Cincinnati has emerged as a shining example of what is possible when targeted economic development initiatives intersect with local talent, professional infrastructure, and community support. At the center of this success story is the **Ohio Motion Picture Tax Credit**, which has proven to be one of the most effective performance-based economic development tools available to the state.

According to recent analysis, Ohio's Motion Picture Tax Credit now yields a **\$3.10 return for every dollar invested**. This is a remarkable achievement by any public investment standard, underscoring the program's efficiency and long-term impact. The return is not theoretical—it is measured through detailed post-production accounting, which ensures that **no incentives are distributed until actual, verified in-state expenditures have occurred**. This level of fiscal responsibility ensures transparency, minimizes risk, and maximizes return.

Cincinnati has become one of the most consistent beneficiaries—and contributors—to this statewide success. **Every production that has filmed in Cincinnati has returned**, often multiple times. Some have returned six or seven times, a powerful indicator of Cincinnati's value as a film destination. This exceptional repeat business demonstrates the city's professionalism, logistical convenience, and community readiness to support large-scale productions.

Cincinnati's emergence as a film industry leader is not going unnoticed. Two recent milestones underscore the city's growing prominence on the global stage:

- **Sundance Film Festival Finalist:** Cincinnati was named one of the top three finalists to host the prestigious **Sundance Film Festival**—the world's premier event for independent cinema. This recognition alone marks a significant milestone for a city that only began building its film infrastructure just over a decade ago.
- **Host of AFCI's 50th Anniversary Global Conference:** In 2025, Cincinnati will host the **Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) 50th Anniversary Conference**, making it the first North American city to host the event in eight years—and the first ever to open the doors to non-members. This is more than a professional gathering; it's a high-profile vote of confidence in Cincinnati's growing status as a global production hub.

The Ohio Motion Picture Tax Credit is not merely about entertainment—it is about **economic development, job creation, and workforce retention**. Film productions rely on a wide array of local industries: carpenters, caterers, hotel operators, electricians, costume designers, and more. Every project generates a ripple effect that boosts local businesses and creates sustained economic activity across sectors.

Moreover, the program has helped **develop homegrown talent and built local career pathways**—making it more likely that Ohio’s brightest creatives, technicians, and entrepreneurs can thrive in their own state, rather than leaving for industry hubs on the coasts.

Cincinnati’s trajectory is clear: it is a rising star in the international film landscape, and a model of how the Ohio Motion Picture Tax Credit can be leveraged to create enduring economic, cultural, and reputational value.

Now is the time to **continue and expand** this proven program—to keep Ohio competitive, creative, and on the map as a premier destination for global film production. Enhance the current tax credit to \$80 Million/year in order to continue fostering good paying jobs and dollars into Ohio’s economy.