



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 Jackee Pugh, and I'm the Executive Director of the Belmont County Tourism Council.

In the Spring of 2022, I had the pleasure of scouting for a film that would have been shot in Belmont County. As you can imagine, we don't get a lot of these types of requests in Belmont County, but the prospect of it is so exciting for our rural area. As far as I know, the only notable movies filmed in Belmont, were *Unstoppable* with Denzel Washington in 2010, and prior to that, *Silence of the Lambs* in 1991.

As the Director of Tourism, I see what *Shawshank Redemption* has done for tourism in Richland County. In her 2017 book "The *Shawshank Redemption* and Hope for Mansfield Ohio," Brianna Winemiller says, "*The Shawshank Redemption* possessed the power and the poignancy to bring interest, revenue, and town appreciation back to Mansfield." She notes the amount of income revolving around "film tourism" in Mansfield, "this revenue trickles down to local businesses offering *Shawshank* themed products, such as Reformatory Red wine, *Shawshank* Sundae, *Redemption* Pizza Pie and *Jail House* Java."

I'd love to see film tourism come to Belmont County, and Senate Bill 4 can make that happen. The film we scouted for with John Daugherty in 2022, loved the look of Belmont County, but started looking at other states because of the uncertainty of the current Ohio Motion Picture Tax Credit, and ultimately chose a different state.

We take great pride in our county. Belmont County is beautiful, and we love to showcase that beauty every chance we get! A flourishing film industry across the state might just highlight our little corner of Appalachian Ohio. If that's the case, jobs and revenue would follow, and an increase of tourists.

Please consider passing SB4. It's good not only for myself and my county, but all my constituents around Ohio in tourism.

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