

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 Victoria Harris, and I am the Founder of a Health and Safety Company that services the Film Industry. My business, Viral Solutions, LLC started here in Columbus, Ohio and provided COVID-19 testing and Covid Compliance Services for one of four films green lit by the Screen Actor's Guild at the beginning of the pandemic. They/Them/Us, was the only independent small budget film in that group. A passion project of Kenyon Film Professor John Sherman, it was developed, written, produced and distributed all from Ohio.

They/Them/Us took me from working in the clinical built environment and launched me into the Film Industry. As one of the only companies in the industry that could provide the turnaround times needed for testing and the knowledge of how productions worked, this Ohio company never stopped working on set and did not have one shut down. I have flown well over 250 times in the past two years.

As a small woman owned business, I was directly affected by the lack of a film tax credit in Ohio. The lack of opportunities and projects led me to Illinois, traveling back and forth for two years so that I could build and develop my Ohio based company in Illinois. While the parent company is here, I had to establish an LLC in Illinois in order for the productions hiring me to get the benefit of the Illinois tax credit.

I became a part of the Illinois film community and spent a lot of my free time with the people that advocated and lobbied (and continue to do so) to get the changes made to the film tax credit in Illinois... I witnessed the impact it made, the jobs it created, and the opportunities developed for young people trying to break into the industry. That tax credit is the reason production companies go to Illinois, New Jersey, Atlanta, etc.

You have a deeply passionate group of people, like me, some who have left Ohio and taken their talents elsewhere, but would come back in a second to build, develop, invest, and create. The opportunities for jobs and new industries are endless. And the ROI is well documented.

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 in diverse industries 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 in person tomorrow.

Respectfully,

Victoria Harris  
Founder, Viral Solutions, LLC