

January 28, 2023

I am providing written testimony on behalf of House Bill 2182. I am a filmmaker and professor at the University of Kansas. I am a member of SAG-AFTRA and have worked as an actor and producer at large and most fondly in Kansas.

Knowing there was no industry here to pursue my goals I moved to New York in 1990 and split my time between New York and Los Angeles for my career. I returned to Kansas to act in films for Kevin Willmott. I met Kevin when my dad's neighbor dropped by when I was visiting his farm and said "There's another film person here, you should meet him."

I produced and acted in the film *Earthwork* about Stan Herd. We grew the credits in fields and shot them with a drone before everyone had one. I produced and acted in *The Sublime and Beautiful* getting some of the best reviews of my career. Typically, I would bring in some actors from the coasts, and some key crew and fill in the rest of the roles locally. It was my profound pleasure and pride to travel in the larger markets in the United States and worldwide to promote the films made in Kansas, telling Kansas stories.

For filmmakers to bring their films here they had to have key connections here. If any money would come from outside, it was difficult if not impossible to sell shooting here over a state with tax incentives. I worked as a producer on an early iteration of the current award-winning film *Till*. I could not convince investors to bring the project here. I am glad it got made but it was without the industry here I had hoped for.

I now train our young Kansans at KU who choose to go to college here over a film school in a supercity (New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Atlanta). I meet their families when I recruit, and I tell them the truth about whether they could work full-time here. Some can, most leave. Some, like me, return to raise children in a place where their family is and outside of the intensity of life in one of the super cities.

I am excited that Kansas *could* be competitive in this industry. America is known worldwide for our arts. I gladly contribute yearly to keep a license plate that says: 'State of the Arts.' I believe in the arts as a way to share stories, communicate and yes, entertain. I would love to see the brightest from our colleges and universities stay and start their families here.

Most of all, I would love to see our state on our screens. It brings pride and joy. I have spent my life in this work. I would like to see more done here.

Thank you for your consideration,

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