

State of Kansas

Senate Chamber

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Chair Erickson and Members of the Senate Commerce Committee,

I stand in support today of SB 91. For many years, I served as a video production faculty member and advisor. In that capacity, I also coordinated a film festival that had high school and college participants, awards, and panel presentations by a robust group of filmmaking professionals. Patrick Rea, producer, writer and director; Hanuman Brown-Eagle, director of photography; Robert Cecil, president of Outpost Worldwide; and Steph Scupham, KC Film Office Director were just a few individuals that shared their insights to breaking into the professional world of filmmaking and their ties to Kansas.

From the creative and academic standpoint, I know first-hand that Kansas has its share of talented, innovative, budding filmmakers that leave our state to advance their careers in the film industry. Just visit the KC Film Office website and you'll find: "State of Kansas film incentives are inactive at this time." This MUST change!

While I'm typically less than thrilled with incentives, I know that the film industry won't scout communities or states for filming substantial projects without that availability. And when they do select a location, opportunities abound for locals to serve in support roles behind the scenes. Over the years, my students have had a handful of opportunities and the experiences have been invaluable...working side by side with professional videographers, sound directors, and lighting experts are experiences that are rarely duplicated in the classroom.

I appreciate that this bill includes funding for workforce development and for supporting students and programs in our community colleges, technical colleges and universities. Suggestions for amendments, should you work this bill, are for sections seven and eight:

- Rather than complicating a process, the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) have established procedures to award student scholarships with work and residency requirements. The funds could be distributed from the Commerce Department to KBOR rather than have the Commerce Department develop a new process and procedures.
- It would also be helpful that funding be directed toward existing film, video production and/or audio production academic programs that are already approved through KBOR in our colleges and universities. These are very expensive programs to start up and the lure of potential funding, that would not be guaranteed to continue from year to year would make it difficult for institutions to sustain.
- Finally, workforce development for local production and recording companies is best facilitated through continuing education services that are offered by our community and technical colleges and our universities. Disbursement of funds such as these for this purpose are also being handled by KBOR.

Many thanks,

Senator Molly Baumgardner