

Senate Assessment & Taxation Committee

Proponent Testimony for SB 228

Brian Mitchell

March 23, 2021

Chairman and Members of the Committee, my name is Brian Mitchell. I am a 3rd generation Southwest Kansas Dirt farmer, with an “out of control” movie theater hobby. My family’s theater circuit has 15 locations in seven states, with 6 locations in Kansas.

I am here to support SB 228, which authorizes the retention of sales tax for the sales of admission tickets to certain events.

The pandemic has hurt entertainment venues hard, especially movie theaters. While safety is a primary concern, necessary capacity limitations combined with a lack of new movie releases, has caused industry revenues to plunge by 80% across the nation.

Although we have been able to reopen all of our Kansas locations, we are operating on weekends only..... and with limited showtimes.

I am pleased to say how happy our customers are returning to the theaters. Older couples that have been fully vaccinated, thrilled to meet up with other couples to have a shared experience. Families that are tired of sitting at home and streaming. Teenagers glad to be on a real date, instead of sitting in one of their parent’s basement watching TV. Movie theaters are truly a cultural gathering place and have been for over 100 years.

However, the hole that has been dug by the pandemic is deep & will take quite some time to get out of.

I can sit here today and tell you, how proud I am, of my home state of Kansas. I know that you all have had disagreements about how to govern during these difficult times. But all one has to do is look at other states we do business in.....and it is easy to be grateful for our Kansas locations.

One example.... is we have three New Mexico locations that have been closed down for over one year now.

I am also grateful for past grants you have awarded movie theaters. Those definitely came at a time when they were greatly needed.

While the movie theaters will eventually recover.....we are still a long way from a recovery. Tax relief offered by SB 228 would provide another critical lifeline to help us get to the other side of this pandemic. And also help contribute to the State's economic recovery & quality of life....when blockbuster movies finally return to our screens later this year.

Thank again for your support and for your willingness to listen to our concerns

**Brian Mitchell
Mitchell Farms & Theatres
Elkhart, Kansas**