

Honorable Co-Chairs and members of the committee, my name is Justin Habel, and I am the owner of Q6 Model and Artist Management in Portland. I have owned my business for 23 years, and have represented, literally, hundreds of local actors and models (collectively called "talent") over that time. Our sole source of revenue, as a business, is the commission we take from our talent when they work on a film, television, commercial or print project. That is our ONLY revenue. Consequently, when there is more production in Oregon, we will have more opportunities to generate income for our talent, which in turn creates more revenue for my business. That is why I am asking for your support for HB 2167, which allows Oregon to compete more effectively with other states in drawing production to our communities statewide.

During my 23 years of being an agent in Oregon, I have witnessed both the boom and the bust years in the production community. In the mid 90's, Oregon benefitted from two television series filming here concurrently. We also saw a huge uptick in movie production, primarily television movie production. It was a good time in our industry. In the late 90's and into 2000, the industry died in Oregon, thanks to a strong dollar driving work up to Canada. The exchange rate was so favorable to producers, that many took their work up north and saved a ton of money in doing so. Nationwide, our industry suffered. Canada benefitted tremendously for many years. Unfortunately, in 2001 the amount of production in Oregon had dwindled down to barely a trickle. I had to look at my bottom line. There was barely anything being produced here, so I decided to disband my entire acting division and only have a models division. It was quite a blow to the community, as we had built up a division of actors stronger than any in the Northwest. It was a clear sign to all that something had changed. I let go of a wonderful employee who had helped me run that division for years. I could no longer devote an additional salary to a division that was producing so little income. It was the start of some lean years in the production community. Many crew members had to either relocate to Vancouver, B.C., or work up there during the week and come home on weekends. They had to go where the work was. It was one of the hardest decisions I've ever made, as it was like disbanding a family.

In the back of my mind, I always carried the hope that one day I would be able to re-open that division again, as it's where my interests primarily lie, in film, television and commercial work. I would get the bi-annual call from a group of my old actors, wanting to take me to lunch and just see "where I was at", and if I'd reconsider opening the division again. Year after year I would tell them no, that I would have to see an uptick in production, and consequently a potentially new revenue stream, if I was ever to re-open. Gradually, I noticed exactly that happening. Many models act as well, so during this time of not representing actors, I would still get calls from production companies. I was getting more commercial calls, more film calls and then LEVERAGE came to town. I can attribute this increase in production directly to two programs: the Oregon Production

Investment Fund and the Greenlight Oregon Labor Rebate. Knowing these programs were drawing in new production, in the fall of 2009 I re-opened my acting division.

Part of the draw of Oregon is, and always will be, its different landscapes. From Portland, the production community's epicenter, you are never more than three hours away from desert, mountains, coastline or urban bustle. The diversity in landscape makes it ideal for episodic television, which can vary in location from episode to episode. An episodic television series, like LEVERAGE, which currently films in Oregon, produces roughly 18 episodes in a season. Each episode casts numerous roles. That creates hundreds of opportunities for actors in a season. It's all about opportunities. We need these opportunities for our actors. These roles WILL be cast locally, regardless of whether my actors book the roles or not. Some actor and some agent in Portland will benefit financially from every role cast in production in Oregon. These wages are then taxed and create revenue state and local government revenue.

I have devoted half of my life to owning THIS type of business in THIS state. I love Oregon, and I love working in this industry. Please help us keep these programs in effect by supporting HB 2167. Thank you.