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April 1, 2015

RE: SB872

Dear Chairman Lee Beyer and Members of the Senate Committee on Business & Transportation,

As the founder and Executive Director of Southern Oregon Film and Media and an active producer in the Oregon film and commercial industry, I have experienced first hand the growth in the capacity and capability of our industry as it has tracked alongside the increases in our state film incentive. More productions means our crews become better skilled, equipment providers purchase more gear, and producers become more confident in what they will be able to achieve in our state.

Today, in fact, as you hear testimony in support of increasing our state incentive, I am on set producing a commercial shooting in Central Oregon, and the evidence is all around me. I was able to pull a very strong crew and several trucks of equipment out of the Portland market despite that town being very busy. I also hired several crew members out of Southern Oregon - two production assistants and two union teamster drivers - who are just 4 out of an entire community of crew and cast members able to live and work in Southern Oregon thanks to the larger incentive attracting the recent features *Wild* and *Brothers in Law*, and the indigenous part of the fund making possible the smaller indie features such as *Black Road*, *Redwood Highway* and *Night Moves*.



On set today - 4/1/15 - in Central Oregon

From l to r: a strong crew from Northern and Southern Oregon; teamsters Steve McMahan and Sam McMahan from Cave Junction with producer Gary Kout of Ashland; Camera PA Jasmine Karcey from Ashland

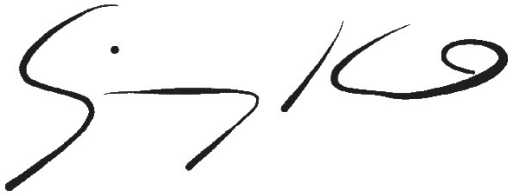
* Southern Oregon Film and Media (SOFaM) is a 501(c)6 non-profit whose mission is to support, grow and promote film and media activities in Southern Oregon.

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I am also acutely aware of how many productions we aren't able to attract because the funds in our incentive are limited. In my role with SOFaM, I am frequently contacted by productions interesting in shooting in Southern Oregon thanks to its strong and growing reputation as a film-friendly locale (such as Ashland being named the #1 Town to Live and Work as a Filmmaker by Moviemaker magazine in 2015). When asked about the incentive, I can explain its particulars all the while knowing that depending on where in the fiscal year it is, funds might not be available and the production is likely to consider going elsewhere.

I urge the Oregon legislature to support our industry and its future potential by increasing the funds available in the Oregon Production Investment Fund. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Kout'.

Gary Kout
Executive Director
Southern Oregon Film and Media

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