



**Testimony from Steven L. Rychetnik re: HB112  
March 28, 2013**

Good afternoon. My name is Steve Rychetnik and I am the cinematographer at SprocketHeads here in Anchorage. I've been a filmmaking professional in Alaska since 1977.

I appreciate the time you've given me to speak in **support** of the Alaska Film Incentive Program.

Our company, SprocketHeads, is on the front lines of Alaska's developing film industry. We work in the trenches in all phases of the feature film and commercial productions, from answering first inquiries, to well after the production has wrapped.

**Before** the incentive program, I was faced with shutting down our business and moving my family to a film incentive state like New Mexico.

**Because of** the film incentive program, in 2010 I was hired to be a 1st Unit camera operator on EVERYBODY LOVES WHALES.

I was also the sole camera operator for WHALES 2nd Unit that shot in Barrow and captured the "local color" of the community. These are the images that give the film it's character, it's authenticity, and a sense of place.

When the Nic Cage/John Cusak film, FROZEN GROUND came to town, I worked as a 1st Unit cameraman and was 2nd unit director of photography.



I am honored to have been asked to be a cinematographer on two big budget, and several smaller budget, feature films that are working to bring their productions to Alaska.

Years ago I scouted locations with Batman director Christopher Nolan as he was preparing to shoot his Alaska-based thriller, *INSOMNIA*. The director wanted to shoot his movie in Alaska but had to take it to Canada because Alaska did not have film incentives; **incentives always trump location.**

For example, A-list director Antione Fuqua, with whom I had the pleasure of working with last year on his scout in Alaska, shot his recently released film, *OLYMPUS HAS FALLEN*, a story that takes place at the *White House in Washington, DC... in Louisiana because of their aggressive film incentive program.*

Our company, SprocketHeads, is currently working with over ten feature films in various stages of development who have already invested years of time and money to bring their productions to Alaska.

In December SprocketHeads did a national production for Arby's in Anchorage and Kodiak, and we're currently in pre-production for national and international commercials that would otherwise not be spending their dollars in Alaska if we didn't have film incentives.

If Alaska did not have an incentive program the Arby's commercial would've gone to Massachusetts and we wouldn't have had the additional benefit of showcasing our scenery and seafood night and day on network television.

Perhaps you've watched *HOUSE OF CARDS*, the taut political thriller recently released in 13 one-hour episodes by NETFLIX. That series was produced in



Maryland and *continues* to bring them substantial positive economic impact.

We recently met with an executive from NetFlix; imagine how Alaska could economically benefit from landing a dramatic series like HOUSE OF CARDS?!

Movie-making is business, that's why it's called the film **BUSINESS**. It doesn't matter if you love movies or just don't like popcorn and milk duds. **Film is business**. And in the film business there are just as many conservatives as there are liberals. So what really matters is this: having a film business in Alaska is aggressive economic development.

So let's loose the dialog and cut to the chase- **You need to keep your word**. You should honor the promise you made to Alaska businesses and Alaskans when you extended the program to 2023; it's not only the right thing to do, its good business.

Thank you.





April 1, 2013

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To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Fairbanks Convention & Visitors Bureau (FCVB), we would like to state our opposition to HB 112 which would repeal the Alaska Film Production Tax Incentive Program.

FCVB contributes to the economic well-being of the Fairbanks area by executing an effective tourism marketing program. While fulfilling this role, we believe that FCVB has a unique viewpoint to share on this bill. As an economic development program, FCVB believes the extension of the Film Production Tax Credit creates jobs for Alaskans and diversifies the economy. While films are in production in Alaska, there are measurable benefits to hotels, airlines, restaurants and others in the travel & hospitality industry.

FCVB must stress that the Film Production Tax Credit and film projects that portray images of Alaska do not replace the need to market Alaska as an attractive tourism destination. By definition, this tax credit promotes the new production of film projects within Alaska. It does not require such projects to promote Alaska as a destination, portray Alaska in a positive light, create a direct response mechanism for possible visitors, provide tools to facilitate planning a vacation to Alaska or connect viewers to Alaskan businesses. For these goals, a well-funded Alaska tourism marketing program is required.

Therefore, we wish to convey our continued support of the Film Production Tax Credits as an economic development program for an emerging industry. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Deb Hickok at (907) 459-3770 or [dhickok@explorefairbanks.com](mailto:dhickok@explorefairbanks.com).

Warm Regards,

Matt Atkinson, Chair  
Board of Directors

Deb Hickok  
President and CEO

## Helen Phillips

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**From:** Daniel George  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 02, 2013 9:41 PM  
**To:** House Finance Legislation  
**Subject:** FW: HB 112

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**From:** James Robinson [<mailto:jkrobinson@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 02, 2013 9:55 AM  
**To:** Rep. Bill Stoltze  
**Cc:** Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Steve Thompson; [Representative.Steve.Thompson@akleg.go](mailto:Representative.Steve.Thompson@akleg.go); Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** HB 112

Hello,

For several reasons pushing through HB 112 is a bad idea. As you well know it is very difficult for a business to plan ahead if the rules abruptly change. Not only is it bad business to change the Film Incentive bill it makes Alaska look like a banana republic. I cannot think of any industry in Alaska that is not offered incentives to do business here. It is especially important to incentivize the nascent film industry. Please do not renege on your promise to the film industry and Alaskan's, do not support HB 112.

Thank You

James Robinson

## Helen Phillips

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**From:** Daniel George  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 02, 2013 9:51 PM  
**To:** House Finance Legislation  
**Subject:** FW: oppose HB 112

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**From:** Brian Wescott [<mailto:alaskawescott@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 27, 2013 10:29 AM  
**To:** Daniel George  
**Subject:** oppose HB 112

Dear Representative

I strongly urge you to oppose House Bill 112. It would be a fatal disaster for a vital new sector of the economy in Alaska.

Cordially,

Brian Wescott  
Fairbanks