Good morning, Mr. Chair. My name is Amy Lillard and I am the Executive Director of Washington Filmworks, the private non-profit organization that manages the Motion Picture Competitiveness Program (which we affectionately call the MPCP) as well as the State Film Office.

Thank you for allowing us the time to respond in person today to the JLARC report on our program.
The MPCP represents a core investment in the state’s creative economy. While the JLARC report highlights the fiscal impact of the program, it does not accurately reflect the full economic benefits of the MPCP, including the vital role that film plays throughout the economy.

The motion picture projects that the MPCP brings to Washington State often represent the highest profile and most engaging work for the statewide film community. WF is pleased to have financially supported Z Nation, a episodic series that airs on the SyFy Channel that wraps season 2 this week in Spokane. We are also pleased to partner with the producers of Twin Peaks, a production that will spend more than 5 weeks filming in western Washington this fall.

It is the work that the MPCP secures that is a cornerstone of film careers, allowing out community to live and WORK in Washington. The MPCP is also responsible for sustaining 100s of businesses that support the film industry.

But what is often overlooked is how film is the gateway for growing industries and job creation in Washington State, providing talent and infrastructure to creative economy sectors such as mobile technology, social media, video games, theatre and music.
Technology advances and the proliferation of digital distribution platforms have greatly influenced the way audiences consume media. Nielsen released a study in January 2015 that states there are 2.4 billions users on the internet and 70% of those people use the internet every day.
And while 87% of people polled reported that they watch “television,” the reality is that they are not watching “television” at all but actually watching motion picture content on devices such as personal computers, smartphones and tablets.
And what’s really interesting is that they are not only watching content, they are watching a lot of content. Nielson reports that on average young adults are watching 9 hours of content online per week where as adults over 50 are watching 6 hours of online video per week.

Why is this important? As more content is produced and consumed, there are additional employment opportunities not only for film industry professionals but also other key sectors in Washington State. Increasingly more technology companies partner with film production companies to produce content distributed digitally. Computer games, training videos and other interactive media companies are seeking film expertise and production workers to help develop and deliver content.
Included on this slide are some of Washington State’s corporate titans and all of them are producing content. From national commercials to social media, from video games to studio partnerships, from music videos to training films, successful enterprises rely on the film industry to tell their stories, both locally and around the world.
In 2013 WF launched the Innovation Lab, a groundbreaking program that financially supports WA filmmakers and filmmakers using emerging technologies. The program leverages the best of what WA State has to offer in storytelling and technology. It is creating new business models and creative content that can be seen almost anywhere.
We agree with JLARC’s assessment that the intent of the law needs to be revisited. Given the dramatic changes in the entertainment industry since 2006, it is important to consider the role that the MPCP plays in retaining film industry talent and infrastructure. to support the ecosystem of Washington’s creative economy.