

Synthetic Cinema

INTERNATIONAL

Senator Daily, Representative Staples, members of the CT Finance Committee, my name is Andrew Gernhard of Synthetic Cinema International, LLC (SCI) based in Rocky Hill, Connecticut, and I am here to testify on Senate Bill 933 and specifically Section 7, dealing with the Film and Digital Media Incentive Program.

The State of Connecticut was forward thinking in enacting the tax credit law and becoming a film-friendly state. Before the tax credit, Connecticut was at the bottom of the barrel within the United States for film production. As I have heard, Connecticut is currently slated to have a number of major and minor productions coming to the State in 2009/10. Synthetic Cinema International, itself, is planning to produce more low-budget features in Connecticut within the next couple years. For the past four years we have produced one feature per year, which have gone out the world audience through such major players as Universal Studios and Lionsgate. We are planning on increasing the production schedule to three films in 2009 that represents a three-fold increase on what we are currently spending in Connecticut on production. I would not want to have to shop around to neighboring states in order to attain a better tax credit. I want to continue to employ Connecticut cast and crew, and call Connecticut our base of operations for many years to come. On a side note, aside from the feature films, my company produces over two dozen commercials (national, regional and local), corporate, educational, marketing and web based programming throughout the year all within state boundaries. The tax credits have been essential for my company to grow, even in this terrible economy.

Although it is understood that we have to look everywhere for revenue opportunities, I fear that the proposed change to the current tax credits may lessen revenue rather than increase it due to the deterrence that the proposed legislation may create. It's simpler and more cost-effective for a production company to have a writer change the location of a movie, than to shoot a film in a location where the costs are prohibitive.

The State has a great thing going for the film and media business. Although the state is looking for revenue, the proposed language of 933 may hurt the State's ongoing effort to attract the business that can produce that much needed revenue.

Thank you for your time and efforts. I hope that you will consider the issues I have raised.

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For information on Synthetic Cinema, please visit: www.syntheticcinema.com

Synthetic Cinema International, LLC: Founded in 2004 by Andrew Gernhard, Richard J. Lucas and Bonnie Farley-Lucas, SCI specializes in the production, distribution, sales and financing of independent feature films. As a full-service independent production and distribution company working within an ever-changing domestic and international marketplace, SCI is dedicated to delivering quality film products that are highly marketable.

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