

Oral Testimony Before the Connecticut Commerce Committee
NBC Universal
Monday February 25, 2010

Members of the Committee, Co Chairs [Gary LeBeau & Jeff Berger], my name is Tracie Wilson. I am Vice President with NBC Television's Programming & Development and directly in charge of NBC's only owned production studio located outside of New York or California – the Stamford Media & Production Center. As you know, at the Stamford production studio we produce 3 52-week television programs which command 175 permanent, full time jobs and 30 part-time jobs. In addition, on each of 180 live production days each show attracts an audience 190 persons strong to downtown Stamford.

I live in Darien but previously traveled to Chicago and New York to support these shows. I now not only live in Connecticut, I work in Connecticut, and have relocated 65 new Connecticut residents in the short 9 months since this project started. We have been embraced by the community and have likewise worked to return the partnership. I recently accepted the invitation to join the Board of Directors for the Chamber of Commerce and the Stamford Center of the Arts.

I am here to respectfully share what the existing Connecticut Film & Digital Media production tax credit means to us and means to downtown Stamford.

I thought I would do this with a list of fun facts:

- We invested \$3.5 million to convert the Rich Forum Theater into a Media & Production Studio.
- In effect, NBCU saved the theater from bankruptcy and preserved both a ballet school and the performing arts in downtown Stamford.
- Each show commands an audience of 190 persons, on each of 70 production days:
3 shows x 190 guests x 70 production days = Increased foot traffic: 39,900 strong.

- Combined all three shows travel approximately 146 guests per production week. The Stamford Media Center's talk shows, during a typical production year, travel approximately 4,672 guests to the greater Stamford area from August to May.
- Taken together, the shows will secure ~ 4,500 hotel rooms during a season.
- A very happy pizzeria (Atlantic and Remo's Pizza)! 190 guests x 1.5 pizza slices x 70 production days = 19,950 slices. Moreover, local businesses such as Rack n' Roll Café, Wolfe's Cleaners, Katie's Gourmet, Simply Signs, Building One Cleaning, Fairfield County Vending, Encon Heating/Air, USA Taxi, Affordable Bus Charters and City Carting have all benefited from NBC Universal's new Stamford location.
- Thousands of car service/transportation requests for guests and others coming to the shows, all hired locally.
- Maury Povich is currently involved in Public Service Announcements promoting Hartford Public Schools and has worked for years with his wife Connie Chung to promote adoption nationally.
- Jerry Springer just completed two seasons as the host of NBC's primetime hit series "America's Got Talent," four weeks of which were produced live at Foxwoods. In addition, he is a political activist, public speaker and the former Mayor of Cincinnati, Ohio.
- Steve Wilkos, who is currently in his second season as the host of "The Steve Wilkos Show, is a former Marine and 12-year veteran of the Chicago police force. Steve is now a national spokesman for USA Cares, a non-profit organization that helps wounded veterans and their families (www.usacares.org). Steve relocated his family and they are now full time Connecticut residents.
- As promised last year, a permanent NBCU television production footprint in Connecticut will naturally attract additional productions – which it did. The syndicated version of Deal or No Deal shot at Sonalyst over the course of 6 months and attracted in excess of 100 jobs.

The Stamford production studio attracts permanent, recurring television production jobs, everything from production assistants to producers, from travel agents to accountants.

Without the 30% production credit, in its current form, such a growth in infrastructure and jobs would not have been a possibility.