

Dear Senator Daily, Representative Widlitz and the members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee,

I am writing you in support of the film incentive portion in the "ACT CONCERNING THE GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON REVENUE". (SB 1007) I am a Connecticut resident who is currently employed by Sony Pictures/Showtime Networks as the Art Director on the show "The Big C" that shoots in Stamford. This cable program was originally shot in California and is a great example of how Connecticut's film incentive program attracts new business to our state.

As a unionized freelance worker I usually work two to five jobs a year for various production companies. The State's film program brings more of this work to the state which employes more Connecticut residents in good high paying union and non union jobs. As the show's Art Director it is my responsibility to source materials and vendors for our stage sets. (i.e. paint, construction materials, decorative dressing, sign materials, hand props, etc.) I can assure you that every effort is made to keep those dollars in state with Connecticut businesses. I have also worked in New York, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island and I can also assure you that the same efforts are made on productions in those states as well. If Connecticut reduces or eliminates this program millions of dollars in production budgets will simply just go elsewhere.

It takes years to build an industry and give vendors the kind of confidence to invest in the sort of inventory of products we are looking for. I urge you not to hurt this growing business by inserting the kind of uncertainty that has previously ruined Rhode Island's and New Jersey's film community. When Rhode Island capped their tax credit a few years back film production immediately stalled and left the state. In Rhode Island there were new companies that had sprung up to provide all the services that we needed in state and they have mostly gone out of business as a result of film projects going to Boston.

With Connecticut in the film business we don't just steal work from New York State, we actually encourage more business to come to the tri-state area and build a stronger regional economy. The film incentives made it possible for Laura Linney to bring her show here to Connecticut. I have read some criticism of film incentives in other states but they lack the built in advantage that Connecticut has. We are geographically advantaged by being the next door neighbor to one of the two major production centers in the country. New York is an economic engine. We would be foolish to walk away from the millions of dollars in good paying, union and non union jobs the film industry creates. Even more foolish to end the millions of dollars in services that a film or TV project purchases in State.

I urge you to support the Governor's proposal and keep the film incentive program in place.

Thank you,

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