



Leroy Dixon Enterprises, Inc.
6759 Baymeadow Drive
Glen Burnie, MD 21060
410-768-1933 1-800-TENTING
Fax 410-760-0419 www.TENTING.com

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Chair Guzzone and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, 3W
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB452-SUPPORT

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee.

I am writing to express my wholehearted support of the proposed Film Production Tax Credit for the film activity in the State of MD. My husband and I own and operate Party Plus Tents + Events, which is a small family-owned business in Glen Burnie that specializes in Tent and Special Event Rentals. We have a staff of 14 full-time employees, 5 part-time employees, all of which live and pay taxes in the State of Maryland.

We have been very fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with many of the productions that have been filmed in MD over the last twenty-eight years. In speaking to members of these productions most (if not all) were filmed here as a direct result of the tax incentives that have been made available to them. These productions allow us to remain profitable and continue the gainful employment of our staff and the ability to hire additional staff to meet their demands. Quite frankly, without the work that they provide, often our profit would be non-existent.

With the economy slowly limping back to life due to COVID, we were very fortunate to work with the crew at HBO for the filming of We Own the City (WOTC). WOTC brought an abundance of business due to the protocols for social distancing. We were able to add 500 tables, for two, to our inventory, keep our staff at 40+ hours per week, and hire temporary labor. Without their work none of that would have been possible.

As I am sure you are aware, typically, (as with all successful business ventures), the folks in Hollywood work where it is most advantageous for them to generate the most profit possible. The direct result is that when incentives are in place, the productions are willing to set up shop here, which provides an opportunity for my company to maintain and even add staff. It also helps every other vendor that provides products and services to the movie industry. By way of example, we had to partner with another tent company and power company to meet the incredible demands of WOTC. This was a win-win for all parties.

Unfortunately, when the incentives are not in place, the productions follow the path to the areas that do provide them. In the window of time before the most recent tax credit was put into place, we had virtually no film work for many years. This creates an undue hardship to small businesses such as ours to try to capture the additional revenue that can make the difference between success and failure of the company, and employment, or unemployment, for our workers.

As an example, I can remember a few years ago when the incentives were allowed to expire, we were quite excited, as everyone thought that the folks filming the movie "Annapolis" were coming here. These hopes were short lived, however, as we were ultimately to find out that they moved the production to PA. We found out that they built a sound stage there to resemble our Annapolis area, since they were offered incentives that made it advantageous for them to do so.

The bottom line is that the tax incentives work and allow employers such as me and my husband to maintain jobs and grow their businesses in our state. Please give HB432 a favorable report that we so desperately need. I look forward to your positive actions toward passing this legislation.

Sincerely,

Lauri

Lauri Dixon
Vice President

Partial list of credits:

We Own the City

Lady in the Lake

My One & Only

Live Free or Die Hard (Die Hard IV)

The Invasion

Rocket Science

Failure to Launch

Syriana

XXX - 2 State of the Union

A Dirty Shame

Ladder 49

Wedding Crashers

Head of State,

Runaway Bride

Enemy of the State

Tuck Everlasting,

Random Hearts

Liberty Heights

The Replacements

Blair Witch II

Washington Square,

For Richer or Poorer

12 Monkeys

Die Hard with a Vengeance (Die Hard III)

Die Hard II

HBO's Game Change

HBO Veep

The Wire

NBC's Homicide: Life on the Streets

We Own the City (WOTC)