



HIPPODROME
THEATRE *at the*
FRANCE-MERRICK
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

February 18, 2020

Honorable Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Income Tax – Theatrical Production Tax Credit (SB0577 / Cross filed HB1192)

Dear Chairperson Senator Guzzone and Committee Members,

I am in full support of the Theatrical Production Tax Credit (SB0577 cross filed HB 1192) and I hope you are as well. For decades both Networks Entertainment, in Columbia Maryland, and Troika Entertainment, in Gaithersburg Maryland, have led the touring Broadway industry, sometimes producing a combined 70% of all national touring Broadway shows each year. This is not only a cause for bragging rights, “Maryland, the home of National touring Broadway”, but a chance to encourage these companies to conduct pre-tour activities, technical rehearsals, and premiere show openings/performances, in their home state of Maryland first.

The program encourages the use of qualified state-wide entertainment venues, many of which the state has a significant investments in, making them competitive with other venues located in the Northeast states that already offer similar tax incentives to musical and theatrical productions produced on Broadway.

Each production, under this incentive, would create 10,000+ union man-hours in a time of year that our venues are traditionally vacant; stagehands, musicians, and wardrobe/hair union laborers now be working year round. Last year alone the Hippodrome Theatre generated over \$29.7 million dollars in economic impact to the state of Maryland. When Blockbusters like Disney’s THE LION KING sell-out in Maryland, it alone brings an additional \$19 million in economic impact over 4 weeks.

There’s no business like show business in Maryland, please support this crucial bill and in doing so support the economy, union-workers, and two amazing Broadway Touring Producing companies in our state.

Sincerely,

Ron Legler
President
France-Merrick Performing Arts Center
Home of the Famous Hippodrome Theatre



Larry Hogan
Governor

Michael J. Frenz
Executive Director

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Finance

David A. Raith
Chief Financial Officer

May 10, 2019

The Honorable Nancy King
Chair, Budget and Taxation
3 W. Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Maggie McIntosh
Chair, Appropriations
121 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairs King and McIntosh:

I have enclosed a copy of the report entitled "Hippodrome Theatre Economic and Fiscal Impact Analysis FY18" prepared by Crossroads Consulting Services, as required by the Economic Development Article.

In FY 2018, the Hippodrome Theatre generated over \$29.7 million in total spending for the State of Maryland. This resulted in State sales tax, State personal and corporate income tax and the \$2.00 ticket surcharges totaling \$1.9 million in State revenues. In FY 2018, the debt service for the bonds outstanding for the project and \$250,000 for capital charges related to utilities totaled approximately \$1.8 million.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,


Michael Frenz
Executive Director

Enclosure

cc: See Distribution List

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Disney PRESENTS
THE LION KING
THE WORLD'S #1 MUSICAL

**DISNEY'S *THE LION KING* CELEBRATES
SOLD-OUT ENGAGEMENT IN BALTIMORE**

BALTIMORE, MD (December 11, 2017) – Disney's **THE LION KING** is celebrating its sold-out engagement in Baltimore, which concluded on Sunday at the Hippodrome Theatre. The triumphant 4-week return grossed over \$5.6 million at the box office and entertained more than 64,000 patrons during 31 performances. This was *The Lion King's* third time in Baltimore, following a 5-week engagement in 2012.

It is estimated that the Baltimore engagement of *The Lion King* generated an economic benefit of more than \$19 million to the city from travel, hotels, restaurants, parking and other businesses patronized by both theatergoers and production staff. This figure is based upon a Touring Broadway League report which found that, on average, Broadway tours contribute an economic impact 3.52 times the gross ticket sales to the local metropolitan area's economy.

"We are always thrilled to work with Disney to bring spectacular productions like *The Lion King* to Baltimore," stated Ron Legler, President of the Hippodrome Theatre. "The response we've seen from both audiences and the community has been exciting. We're happy to be a part of Charm City's vibrant and growing entertainment industry."

"We have always been so warmly welcomed in Baltimore, and were elated to return for a third time," said Jack Eldon, Vice President, Domestic Touring and Regional Engagements, Disney Theatrical Productions. "We are overwhelmed by the enduring response to the show and thank the Baltimore community and our partners at The Hippodrome and BAA for another sensational engagement."

The North American touring productions of *The Lion King* have been seen by more than 19 million theatergoers in over 70 cities throughout North America.