

J O H N W A T E R S

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

February 14, 2020

RE: SB718 - SUPPORT

Dear Honorable Chair and Distinguished Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee:

My name is John Waters, and every movie I have ever written and directed has been filmed in Maryland.

Without dependable incentive programs, producers will not commit to working in Maryland. They will take the work somewhere else. I have seen this industry suffer when the tax incentives offered have had such a low cap that many interested productions are shut out.

Maryland has an excellent base of movie making infrastructure including local talent and film crews but the skilled workers have suffered due to the low level of incentives Maryland supports. Maybe producers fall in love with our locations and the local crews, that doesn't mean they can confidently sign a contract to shoot here. What if some other production has already used up the limited tax incentive? We have solid infrastructure in-state and we need to keep it. In the highly competitive and geographically flexible film business, jobs only go where the business climate is favorable. You can help make Maryland a strong state for movie making by increasing the available amount of incentives.

We are ready to stimulate this industry and need these higher limit credits to do it. Schools like MICA/Hopkins, Morgan State, Towson, Stevenson, even the high school, Baltimore School for the Arts have film programs ready to contribute to the industry but without a substantial tax credit ceiling we might be training skilled film crews for Georgia, Louisiana and Alabama.

I am writing to ask that you give SB718 a favorable report and pass it out of committee at the level introduced.

Best,



John Waters

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