

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

RE:SB718

When I was an undergraduate at Morgan State University, I changed my major five different times until I finally landed at the screenwriting & animation department, which is Morgan's film program. That final major change was the hardest to make because at the time it was the coolest thing I could think of but the world of film was something I was conditioned to think was unavailable to me. Of course, my parents didn't approve right away, with their biggest concern being making money & a lack of opportunity. Despite that I went into it; gaining skills in camera operation, video editing, animation, and special effects. But the most important thing I learned was how to express myself & tell my story.

When I graduated, my professor helped me get a well-paying job doing videography & editing for the MTA. After that I was fortunate to get a gig as Production Assistant for David Simon, the creator of the wire, on a new t.v. show he was editing in Baltimore. I started to give back to the coming generation of filmmakers by joining the Baltimore Youth Film Arts program, doing workshops throughout the year. I went on to do several corporate & commercial gigs, all the while working on my own artwork & films. That creativity led me to becoming a 2018 Light City Neighborhood Lights award recipient. As a visual artist, I exhibited artwork in the San Francisco museum of the African Diaspora, the Black Theatre in Harlem, and I even have a short film playing right now in the American Visionary Art museum.

My story is proof that film is not just film. It not only gave me opportunity to financially support myself through corporate & commercial work, but it gave me a way to tell my story. It gave me a way to shine a light on Baltimore & our communities. Because of that I would encourage us all to support anything that opens the world of film to people of color, the youth, the city of Baltimore & the state of Maryland.

Kyle Yearwood

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