

BALTIMORE
OFFICE OF PROMOTION & THE ARTS

Chair Anne Kaiser and
Members of the Ways and Means Committee
131 House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

February 12, 2020

RE: HB565

Dear Chair Kaiser and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Debbie Dorsey and I'm the Director of the Baltimore Film Office. Baltimore has had a vibrant film industry for over forty years. The industry suffered in the early 2000's but thanks to members of this committee and the work of the Maryland General Assembly, we were able to somewhat recover because of the Film Production Activity Tax Credit. While we have yet to get a program in place that will allow for growth rather than maintaining one project, we are grateful for having one project and a program to encourage home-grown small budget Maryland filmmakers to produce their work here.


We want these young filmmakers to stay here and we are eager to bring more money and jobs into Maryland from larger productions with these tax credits. We have major motion pictures and television series wanting to come here and spend money, but we are turning them away. We have film schools in both the high school and college levels full of film students who want to work in Maryland and we don't want to see them leave. We want to see all of our crew and actors working on multiple projects and not forced to go to other states to work and spend their money. We need a program with predictability so producers can plan ahead for multiple year series and movies in development.

Remember, these credits are not paid out until all production activity is finished, after all of our crew and actors have worked and earned their salaries and their health care, after all of the businesses that supply materials and other industry needs have enjoyed an influx of business and cash. The production turns its books in for an audit and only then does the state issue the rebate. This is the most transparent of tax credit programs.

We are primed and ready for growth, to provide jobs for our creative and talented cast and crew, to bring money to both small and large businesses and into our economy. We have the studies to show that this program pays for itself and then some.

I respectfully ask that this committee continue to work with us to grow the industry and not eliminate the film tax credit in 2023.

Sincerely,



Debra Donaldson Dorsey
Director
Baltimore Film Office