House Bill 472 (Income Tax – Theatrical Production Tax Credit – Sunset Extension

February 9th, 2026

Dear Honorable Jheanelle Wilkins, Chair, and Members House Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 472, legislation that would extend the termination date of the Theatrical Production Tax Credit from 2027 to 2032. Since its implementation in 2022, this program has proven to be a powerful catalyst for economic growth, cultural enrichment, and the creation of high-quality jobs throughout the State of Maryland.

As a direct result of this credit, Maryland has successfully launched major theatrical productions including *The Wiz*, *Life of Pi*, *& Juliet*, *Water for Elephants*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, and *The Great Gatsby*. Looking ahead, the upcoming season already includes three scheduled launches *Maybe Happy Ending*, *Heathers*, and *Six* demonstrating continued confidence in Maryland as a premier destination for large-scale theatrical production.

Renewing this tax credit is not simply an investment in the arts; it is a strategic investment in Maryland's broader economic infrastructure. I urge your favorable consideration of HB 472 for the following reasons:

Creation and Sustenance of High-Paying Union Jobs
Theatrical productions are labor-intensive and rely on a highly skilled, unionized workforce. This credit directly supports Maryland-based stagehands (IATSE), actors and stage managers (Actors' Equity), and musicians. These are well-paying, "green" jobs that cannot be automated or outsourced and require local talent and expertise. Extending the credit ensures Maryland remains competitive for technical rehearsals, tour launches, and extended engagements, providing stable and reliable employment for our workforce.

Strengthening the Hospitality and Tourism Industry
Touring productions bring hundreds of cast members, crew, and creative professionals to Maryland for weeks at a time. Their presence generates thousands of hotel room nights and sustained business for local restaurants, retailers, and service providers. At a time when the hospitality sector continues to recover and stabilize, the predictable economic activity generated by theatrical productions is an invaluable support.

Significant Economic Multiplier for Local Businesses
While the tax credit requires a minimum of $100,000 in direct in-state spending, actual expenditures often far exceed that threshold. Productions routinely purchase materials and services from Maryland vendors, including lumber, hardware, transportation, catering, marketing, and technical services. Each dollar incentivized through this program produces a meaningful return in local economic activity, ensuring Maryland remains competitive with neighboring states such as New York and Pennsylvania that offer similar incentives.

Positioning Maryland as a Cultural and Creative Hub
A stable, long-term tax incentive sends a clear and compelling message to Broadway producers and national touring companies: Maryland is open for business. Extending the sunset date to 2032 provides the long-term certainty producers need to plan years in advance, ensuring that Maryland families continue to enjoy access to world-class theater while attracting audiences and visitors from outside the state.

The Theatrical Production Tax Credit has already demonstrated its effectiveness as a self-sustaining economic development tool. By passing HB 472, the General Assembly will ensure that Maryland continues to benefit from a thriving, job-creating, and culturally vibrant arts economy for years to come.

I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on this legislation.

Sincerely,

Ron Legler

President, France-Merrick Performing Arts Center

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