

Dirt Haehnel
Saco
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Hello,

My name is Dirt Haehnel. I am a member of IATSE Local 481 with 10+ years of experience in the film industry as a lighting technician and grip. I am based in Saco, Maine and relocated here from New York in 2020. I have seen first hand the positive effects a bill of this sort can have on a community. When significant tax breaks became available in Upstate New York to large scale narrative and commercial productions, the influx of projects into the area was substantial and immediate. I, along with the vast majority of my crew and others were able to permanently relocate from New York City to upstate towns along the Hudson river. This move resulted in huge improvements to our collective quality of life as well as a massive boon to the economies of these small towns. The state of Maine, not only the city of Portland, has an opportunity with the passing of this bill to gain the same profits and economic rewards I saw in New York towns like Kingston, Newburgh, Hudson, Buffalo and many more. These same towns are still benefiting from a consistent flow of production work 5+ years later. The average feature length film from large production houses like Netflix or HBO shoots for 1-3 months with a crew of 50 - 150. Revenue from these production, cast and crew members go directly into local businesses in the food, hospitality and entertainment industries. I have personally worked on over 30 projects like this and have seen the positive effects of a production's presence on the local economy first hand. Maine relies heavily on tourism already as a destination state. The passing of this bill will put us on the map as a film production destination and result in exponential growth to our local economy. We simply cannot afford to not pay attention to this opportunity. Thank you for your consideration and this opportunity to bare my testimony.

Sincerely,
Dirt Haehnel