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As a filmmaker who was born and grew up in Maine - nothing would make me happier than being able to do the job I love in my home state.

As a kid thirty years ago, I thought that if I wanted to make films, I needed to leave Maine.

Sadly, I was right.

Unfortunately, not much has changed since then.

The reality of the film and television business today is that without incentives favorable to out-of-state productions - a state is IMMEDIATELY taken 'off the table' as a potential shooting/production location.

I've directed a studio film for Steven Spielberg at Dreamworks. I've had three indie films premiere at the Sundance Film Festival and worked with companies from Blumhouse to Hulu to Amazon Prime and Paramount, developing and making films.

I spend a lot of time in pitch meetings with these companies - talking about potential projects. As a horror director, 75% of the scripts I'm sent take place in Maine (thank you, Stephen King), but EVERY SINGLE TIME I've brought up the idea of actually shooting a film in Maine - I'm immediately told NO.

Why would a production choose to shoot in Maine when they could benefit from the tax incentives of nearby Massachusetts? Why not just change the setting of the story to someplace that offers great incentives (New Mexico, Utah, Canada)

This is a conversation I've had way too many times.

I continue to try to convince people to shoot in Maine - because I know the incredible things that this state has to offer - but unless changes are made - productions will continue to stay away.

I've seen firsthand what effect a production can have on a local economy. From restaurants, hotels, and catering to places like the local hardware store - film productions SPEND MONEY. They need office space. They need locations. Extras and background talent. They need drivers and vehicles. Carpenters and production assistants. The list goes on and on.

But the VERY FIRST THING at the top of that list is tax incentives.

As an adult, I've moved back to Maine, but unfortunately, if I want to work doing what I love - I still need to leave the state.

If we were to offer competitive tax incentives, I know for a fact that film and television productions would finally come to Maine.

Carter Smith

director: THE RUINS, BUGCRUSH, JAMIE MARKS IS DEAD, SWALLOWED, MIDNIGHT KISS, THE PASSENGER