

May 13, 2025

To: Sen. Nicole Grohoski, Rep. Kristen Cloutier and Members of the Taxation Committee

Re: LD 1957 An Act to Promote Film Production in Maine

My name is Jim Boutin. I am a resident of Hollis Maine. I currently work as a natural history and documentary camera person and have spent a large portion of my career providing technology for the film and broadcast industries. I'm a member of the Maine Film Commission.

38 US states have film incentive programs, including Maine. But our incentives rank at the very bottom. With the recent filming of the movie *Lost on a Mountain in Maine* in upstate New York, the non-competitive nature of our current incentive program became evident to the public.

As outlined in a 2023 study by the Maine Film Association and Professor Todd Gabe of the University of Maine, the film production business was a **\$64 million** contributor to the state economy. With the passage of this legislation we could see this number substantially increase.

This incentive bill will place Maine in a much more competitive position to build a strong media content creation industry. The film production industry is changing quickly. The migration of content to streaming providers has created a surge in quality smaller budget productions. Maine could easily capitalize in this growth area by offering appropriate film incentives. This current bill is well targeted to stimulate growth in this area and bring production investments into the state.

The state is rich in college level programs that award degrees in media related fields. Southern Maine Community College, Husson University, University of New England, Maine College of Art and others offer programs that prepare students for work in media. Currently, most of the graduates have to move out of state in order to support their careers in their chosen creative profession. Increasing film incentives will allow opportunities for Maine youth to have a career in this industry without leaving the state.

There are a number of national and international level actors, producers, production staff and post production skilled individuals that have chosen to live in Maine. Their work currently takes them out of the state. Bringing productions into the state allows us to utilize their talents to build a strong media capability. Additionally, they would serve as mentors to local students and graduates, helping to further build the industry.

This bill is a win for all.

Thank you for taking the time to review this testimony.

I strongly support the passage of LD 1957 and hope you will consider voting "ought to pass".

Jim Boutin