



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MAINE.
ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON
COMMISSIONER

February 6, 2024
Testimony of Victoria Foley
In Support of the amendment to LD 1075
An Act to Promote Economic Growth Through Increased Film Incentives

Good Afternoon, Senator Grohoski, Representative Perry, and distinguished members of the Taxation Committee.

I am Victoria Foley, Director of Legislative Affairs and Communications for the Department of Economic and Community Development. I am here to testify in favor of the proposed amendment to LD 1075. The Department supports the amendment proposed by the sponsor, which would direct the Maine Film Office to work with stakeholders and others and provide a detailed summary to this committee by December 30, 2024.

As you know, the Maine Film Office is charged with promoting TV, film, photography and other media production in Maine. The Office markets Maine as a location for a variety of visual media productions and acts as the official liaison between the visual media industry, state agencies, and production companies.

The Office website, FilmInMaine.com, includes a database of filming locations and film production support services to promote Maine communities, businesses and residents and encourage productions to hire and buy locally. Property owners and businesses are encouraged to add to these listings.

The film industry in Maine contributes to the Maine economy in a variety of ways. It supports jobs for Maine-based industry members. It brings business to communities in regions across the state who provide lodging, food, construction, and other necessary support services to the film crews. And it elevates Maine's visibility and the Maine brand through popular shows like Maine Cabin Masters, the Lost Kitchen, and others, helping to attract visitors, students, businesses, and new residents to our state.

In the summer of 2023, Olsberg SPI completed a comprehensive examination of the State's current production capacity, strengths, weaknesses, constraints, and capacity gaps in key areas of visual media production. This included facilities and equipment, services, vendors, crew, key creative talent, and incentives compared to other states that might attract similar projects, as well as the amount of increased production likely to result from improving Maine Visual Media Production incentives. That report is now public and posted on the FilmInMaine.com website.

In September of 2023, the Director of the Maine Film Office resigned her position. Since that time, Steve Lyons, Director of the Office of Tourism, has been overseeing the Film Office and working with



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MAINE.
ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

HEATHER JOHNSON
COMMISSIONER

the Maine Film Commission. Through the fall, Director Lyons facilitated a stakeholder engagement process around Maine's visual media incentives which included an online survey as well as in-person and virtual stakeholder listening sessions.

We look forward to continuing to engage with the Film Commission, a new Film Office Director, and those who care deeply about visual media incentives in Maine in the coming months, and to presenting the findings to this committee later this year.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to take your questions and any requests for follow up information you may have that we can provide for your work session.