

Tuesday, May 13, 2025

My name is Adam Costa, and I'm the Head of Production for Lone Wolf Media, a non-fiction TV and documentary production company based in South Portland. Lone Wolf has been in business since late 1996. For the last six of those years, we've been one of the most consistent participants in the Maine Visual Media Incentives program.

The past six years have also been the most successful in our company's history. That is not a coincidence. I am here today, and Lone Wolf is still open for business, because of the Visual Media Incentives.

The film and TV business is difficult. It's project-based work with a deadline, so the day you sign a contract for a new project, you already know when the work will end. For most of Lone Wolf's history, when a job concluded, we'd use the profits from that job to develop and sell the next project. Far too often, the distance between one project's conclusion and the next project's beginning is long enough to evaporate any trace of profit, lost to the necessity of keeping people employed and the lights on.

For most of the company's years in business, that was the ebb and flow of our production cycle. There was rarely a year where we did more than survive. But when Lone Wolf received our first wage reimbursement through the Maine Film Office, it allowed us to hire staff and pay for development work *while* we were still in production on another project. The result was simple and obvious, but also paradigm shifting: we were able to develop and sell the next project *before* the current one ended. Suddenly, we found ourselves with positive momentum. We didn't need to spend our profit just keeping the business afloat, we could reinvest it in more meaningful ways to grow the company.

It was with funds from the incentive's wage reimbursement plan that we were able to develop our very popular **HULU** series, *Wild Crime*, which has gone four seasons. In our most recent season, we hired more than twenty-five crew and over sixty actors to work on the show, all from Maine. We spent more than \$1M last year in Maine on that one project alone, most of it in wages to Maine residents.

The Visual Media Incentives have done far more for Lone Wolf than just allow us to develop one successful series. It has allowed us to reshape the work environment at our company. Wages have gone up. We expanded 401K access and matching contributions. We've doubled the size of our management staff. We've increased gross annual revenue from less than \$3M to an average close to \$8M. For the first time in many years, we've been able to offer our employees robust health care benefits—something that was previously unattainable for a small company like ours. These past few years working with the Maine Film Office, Lone Wolf is employing far more Mainers, at higher wages and with better benefits, than at any time in the company's history.

If every Maine production company were able to achieve success similar to Lone Wolf's through these incentives, there would be significant growth in our industry. Far more talented Maine filmmakers would have stable employment here in the state, and we wouldn't see so many of them moving out of state to find work. It is Lone Wolf's belief that the immediate goal of the Maine Film Office should be to bolster our local filmmaking economy by supporting our local production companies and individuals. Applied properly, the Visual Media Incentives give industry professionals a reason to set up shop here and spend their dollars in Maine. That's how we grow our filmmaking infrastructure and create a robust and self-sustaining industry in Maine.

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