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May 13th, 2025

Subj: **Written statement in support of LD1957: An Act to Promote Film Production in Maine**

Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier and members of the committee.

We are James Tinker and Jennifer Millar, the owners of SK-Tours of Maine, located in Bangor. We are a small family business that provides tours based on Stephen King books and movies.

We are here in support of LD 1957.

More competitive incentives for film production will provide a valuable boost to our lagging film tourism industry. Film tourism is one of the largest growing industries in the world. The global film tourism market was valued at \$168B in 2023 and is estimated to grow to \$300B by 2033.

Our small business has brought approximately 30,000 tourists to our local area from 40 different countries, has contributed to the generation of over \$10 million dollars for the Maine economy, and is projected to contribute to another \$10 million in the next 5 years.

Due to the time limit, I will mention just a single example of how Maine has already missed one opportunity due to its lack of incentives. Hopefully, a more competitive incentive program can prevent this from happening again.

The film adaptations *IT*, *IT: Chapter 2*, and *Welcome to Derry*, were all filmed in Port Hope, Ontario, Canada instead of its actual setting of Bangor, fictionally known as Derry, Maine.

The IT franchise has brought an estimated \$75 million in direct spending into the Ontario economy. They have employed over 2,000 locals, turned Port Hope into a tourist destination, spurred film-based walking tours, and created a permanent increase in annual sales for local businesses.

Please keep in mind that these films are set in Maine. That money, those jobs, and the immense increase in revenue and tourism for Ontario could have been in Maine if our incentive program was competitive. It was more cost effective for them to build Bangor in Canada than it would have been to film here. It was time wasted for them, and a lost opportunity for us.

If we don't encourage filming in Maine, our film tourism will fade instead of grow with the rest of the world. LD 1957 is good for the future of our economy, tourism industry, and local businesses.