

BALTIMORE FILM OFFICE

February 7, 2022

Chair Atterbeary and Members of the
House Ways and Means Committee
6 Bladen Street, Room 131
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB432-SUPPORT

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

As Director of the Baltimore City Film Office at the Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts, I'm writing to offer full support of HB432.

Increasing the annual incentive for film production in the state will create more jobs for crew, talent and opportunities for students and other entry level jobs as well as diverse economic spend for businesses of all sizes throughout the state. This program pays for itself, and the state does not refund one dime of tax credits until all of the filming activity is over, money is spent and the books are audited.

The industry is shovel ready through any kind of economy. When the pandemic hit, studios and labor leaders created strict Covid protocols in order to get people back to work and to also address the need for content. In late 2020 and through 2021, commercials, independent films, a pilot and a miniseries filmed in Maryland putting our crew and actors back to work and supporting both large and small businesses during a time they really needed it. And there could've been even more activity if we had a more robust incentive.

Several times a month, my office and the state film office receive calls from studio executives, producers and location managers looking to bring their movies or television series to Maryland. Unfortunately, we continue to tell them that the \$12 million program is closed because the annual credits have been allotted. And that's a shame, because Maryland is losing millions of dollars of economic impact, the revenue for small businesses and jobs that a robust film industry brings.

Maryland recently lost "Manhunt," a miniseries that would've filmed in Prince George's County, southern Maryland, and other locations in the state, FX's "Kindred," the IMDB series "Sprung" which wanted to shoot in Frostburg and Netflix's "Rustin," all because the incentive program was tapped out. "Manhunt" and "Kindred" went to Georgia, "Sprung" and "Rustin" went to Pennsylvania.

This program works! According to the Maryland Department of Commerce, from 2011 to 2022, the projected economic impact of the film industry in Maryland was over One Billion Dollars, hiring over 20,000 Marylanders and supporting over 18,000 Maryland businesses.

We are in a position to grow this industry and HB432 will do just that. Please give HB432 a favorable report at the levels introduced.

Sincerely,
Debra Donaldson Dorsey
Director, Baltimore Film Office

