

February 4, 2022

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

RE: HB432-SUPPORT

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

I am writing in my capacity as the Director of the Saul Zaentz Innovation Fund and Co-Director of the MICA JHU Film Centre to voice my strong support of HB432, which will increase the annual amount of tax credits available for film production in Maryland.

At the Innovation Fund, every year we award approximately \$500,000 to emerging filmmakers in Baltimore and we spend roughly the same amount of money each year on training and development. The JHU MICA Film Centre houses two Graduate and two Undergraduate Film Programs and between us, we are preparing and supporting dozens of young people each year for roles in the film industry.

We see, first-hand what supporting the filmmaking community can do for our community; and we are proud of the reputation Baltimore has developed as one of the most exciting, burgeoning independent filmmaking communities in the US. We have a deep bench of talent, a wide range of attractive locations for filmmaking and some of the most exciting and promising voices in the American filmmaking world right now.

Not only has the tax credit program attracted large film productions to our state and created jobs for our filmmakers and ancillary businesses, the incentive for low budget films has been. The incentive for low budget films is key to retaining our independent creative talent. I work with some of the top emerging independent filmmakers in the industry and they cite the incentive as part of the reason why they believe they will be able to stay in Maryland to and further pursue their career. It is easy to point to the jobs each production in the state creates employment for directors, cinematographers, sound recordists, lighting specialists and editors; but in addition, less obviously perhaps, these productions also create jobs for carpenters, caterers, transportation, fashion designers, music creators and the like.

The economic leverage we get by increasing the tax incentives is great. It is no surprise to any of us in the industry as to the role Georgia's aggressive film tax credits has played in the development of a thriving film economy. From 2007 to 2019, film industry direct spending in Georgia increased from roughly 68 million dollars to nearly 3 billion. The impact of tax incentives will be equally positive to our economy. Please give HB432 a favorable report and pass the bill out of committee at the levels introduced.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Annette Porter