

03.20.06

Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee,

As an active member of the Colorado film industry, a taxpayer, and a registered voter, I am writing to call for the unanimous approval of Colorado House Bill HB1362, the Film Incentive Bill.

The Film Incentive Bill is not merely an incentive for the local film industry; it is an economic incentive for the entire state of Colorado. Let me tell you why.

Entertainment and media is perennially one of America's greatest assets. Today it generates over \$75 billion in sales per year within the United States, it is our nation's number one export overseas, and it is one of the very few areas where we actually have a trade surplus with every country in the world. The industry rakes in more than **\$1 trillion** a year globally. And that trillion is growing at a rate of **7.1% a year**.

37 US states, including our neighbors New Mexico, Utah, and Arizona, have already joined with most of the English-speaking countries across the world in a rush for a stake in this burgeoning industry.

Why isn't Colorado getting in on the new goldrush?

Are my friends in Los Angeles and New York right? Are we a bunch of clueless hicks? Why do we continue to deny the state a film incentive?

Why do we continue to miss extraordinary opportunities for job creation and business growth? By provisioning that 75% of a film's crew must consist of Colorado residents, a film incentive brings jobs for local production talent. And by stipulating that any production must spend at least 75% of its total budget in Colorado with Colorado businesses, the incentive stimulates the economy across the board, from hotels to catering companies to retailers, to equipment rental, to lumber merchants, to car rental agencies to tourism and more.

In Louisiana the production community contributed **\$4 million** to the economy in 2001. **After incentives** were added, production increased to \$125 million in 2004 and **\$600 million in June of 2005**. A film incentive makes sense.

There's a film coming out in February of 2007 called Catch and Release. It stars Jennifer Garner. Romantic comedy. Maybe you'll see it. You'd be proud -- it's set in Boulder, Colorado. Sony Pictures spent five days filming here, and pumped over \$100,000 a day into the state's economy. Guess we're doing just fine without an incentive. Right?

Wrong. The five days and \$500,000 spent in Colorado came after 50 days and \$5,000,000 spent in... Vancouver, Canada. A film set in Colorado shot in Canada? That's right. Our state's inhospitality to film cost us \$5,000,000 just like that, and **it's costing us millions more every day**. Catch and Release. It's up to you.

Committee Members, on Wednesday afternoon you will have an opportunity to do something very good for the people of your state. I urge you all, when HB1362, the Film Incentive Bill, comes before you, to stand up and say yes to jobs, yes to economic growth, yes to showing the world what Colorado has to offer and inviting them in – yes to HB1362.

Thank you.

Alan August

Screenwriter
Denver, CO