

HERE YOU GO

I am sorry i cannot attend the meeting in person, but this is a critical issue in my view so thank you for indulging me a few sentences, to be brief. We have one thing that pulls movies and tv shows into our state today- our nation leading incentive. If we surrender that - or even reduced it to make it close to other states - we become just another player in the game, and the fact is, we are not yet attractive enough to lure business away from a Connecticut, new Mexico or Canada by being just another player. In time, we will be, in time, when we have crew growth, studios, better infrastructure, there will be movies and tv shows that prefer to come to Michigan even at a lower rate than to go elsewhere with a lesser reputation; we know this is true because even now there are plenty of productions who turn us down and go elsewhere for a lesser tax break because of comfort, we need to allow our program to grow on its good course to increase to enough business to justify crew growth, studio investment and the like, this is not to be insensitive to our state, we all know the state is in financial peril but there are ways to tighten up our program, save even millions, without touching the marquee value, that being the 40 percent, remember, these productions are not coming to our state because they love us. they are coming, initially, the same reason you go to the store with the best discount; because we are luring them in.

Please understand that most tv and movie business is run on credit, lending, and banks and backers will not lend money to a production when the place of business seems unstable, that is the picture we have already painted for Hollywood, by talking about cutting this incentive almost from the moment we started it, we sent a message to the people in charge - and more importantly to the money in charge - that we are not a stable place to do work, that we might change our minds at any moment if we actually go ahead and pull the trigger, we can kiss that business goodbye. they wont just see 37 percent where there used to be 40. they will see a state that didn't have the stomach to stand by its own plan for even two years. and they will worry that 37 will turn to 35 in a year. and they will not come.

i beseech the lawmakers, with everything i know about these businesses, to please leave the incentives be for a few more years. the amount of money you would save by slashing them would be minuscule - nowhere near the ridiculous figures such as 50 million that have been floated around. but the damage done to a promising, exciting embryonic industry will be devastating. and we will not get a second chance at it.

thank you

Mitch Albom