

Subject: law amendments committee
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hello my name is Debi Jonatanson. I have worked in the film industry for over 20 years in the transport department. I have always had work in film and have made a good living working all over Nova Scotia. In the last election I was very pleased that Stephen Mcneil promised that if elected he would extend the film tax credit till 2020.

I have many friends that on that promise have bought new cars, new houses and invested their money thinking that we could continue to work hard in the film industry. My daughter partnered in a new company that rents equipment to production companys that come to shoot movies in Nova Scotia. Then the unimaginable happened and the provincial Liberals cut the tax credit in the 2015 budget. They claimed they just altered it. All of the film industry watched in horror as our industry was destroyed without notice or consultation. We all gathered and started talking amongst ourselves and to the public. We were soon to find out that the public was as well stunned to hear how this could happen to a striving industry that gave back to the province so many spin offs.

Yet when we tried to let the government know how important our film industry was, it fell on deaf ears. We had proof that our industry put into Nova Scotia more money than it ever received and that nearly 3000 people were employed and paid taxes back to the province. Still we talked to deaf ears! After using every way to talk to the government we gained more and more people who spoke out. People telling how their small businesses all over the province have benefitted from film shooting. Businesses large and small were all talking about film, both because of profits and how films shot in Nova Scotia put us on the map and largely helped with tourism.

All this finally got the government to listen and start to consult with the film industry. Then we were to hear how little the government knew about film and all the financial spin offs it gave back. So the talks started and we were left with no other choice but to listen to the options that were laid out by the government who knew very little about film. They would not buy the spin off angle!

And here we are today on the verge of a budget that cancels the film tax credit program. Elimination of Film and Creative Industries Nova Scotia which was our only portal to government that had been in operation for years. Film now will be handled by Nova Scotia Business, who has no understanding of how film, television, animation or digital incentives work. Neither does anyone in the film industry know how the NEW Nova Scotia Film and Television Production Incentive Fund will work. Nether the Film Industry nor Nova Scotia Business know how these new rules will be funded or how they will effect our industry.

What we do know that we are all very worried so are productions that were planning on filming here. Some are still trying and some have already pulled out to film where it is more stable and the incentives are better, like Nova Scotia's were before all this careless change came into effect. Our film world is in terrified chaos, with young people scarred that they will have to sell out and move to where film is going. Children have heard all the media and people talking and are scared they will have to leave their homes and schools. A lot of these film technicians have worked here for years or have moved here because our film industry has been growing bigger and bigger year after year. Now all that depends on if we can undo the damage the government has done and if we can start over and try to build on this new fund that has been forced on us. Yes it is better than nothing but totally different run differently and has still a lot of governing talks and planning to do. Lots of questions we need answered so that we can try to rebuild. All of this could have been so different if the Liberal government had only let us know they needed change!! We all could have talked and explained each others needs and worked together to study the economical impact on the economy. It would have stopped the terror that was instilled on film people who had no idea what had hit them nor why. We knew all along that we spend millions of production money all over Nova Scotia.. The government has no accurate picture on the return of the industry versus the government investment in the industry. How can this be true, the government says that no study has

been done since 2004. We dug up one that was done in 2008 and favoured everything about what the film industry has done for Nova Scotia. Again it fell on deaf ears. We heard other provinces who claim high profit off film spin offs. Deaf Liberal ears.

We know a bit of the new fund. It starts July 1st with a new fiscal spending of 10 million (Half as much as it was) We were told that 10 million is a soft cap not a hard cap but not guaranteed anything nor promised anything. We were told that Nova Scotia Business will be fine at handling the New Incentive plan.. It will cover 25 percent all Nova Scotia film spending. we were told it will all work out fine.

Unfortunately being promised and lied to before, my faith in the Liberals, we just are not sure about any of it. On going talks are supposed to continue so that it will all be figured out by the date it is supposed to take over. We are still in limbo. More important Producers wanted to film here are in limbo and no one seems to have any answers for them. So here we are with a very few films going ahead and a few racing trying to get the old fund.

The film industry have more worries ~~because~~ ^{has no acknowledgement} the liberal government of the overall value of the cultural industry to all Nova Scotian as identified in the 2013 Ivany Report. What value could a province have without any culture. We have no clear understanding of the path forward with the NSBI now controlling the incentives available. There is uncertainty about the industry's ability to grow and create jobs given the government's current preoccupation with what it likes to call the fiscal envelope- the amount of investment money the government says it is willing to make available in 2016-17 year.

We in the film and screen industry have a long struggle ahead to make sure we can grow and prosper under the new financial regime. Much is still undecided regarding the precise mechanisms of the new incentives.

But we are strong together and will continue on until we are happy that we can return to where we were before we were destroyed by a Liberal Government who knew nothing of what they were doing or who they were fighting. I think they were surprised by how many sided with us. Which proves definitely we were supporting economical strength and taxes back to Nova Scotia. We are an industry that is totally green and share production wealth in many many places.

I ask that you the government side with us and look at all the spin offs we have to give and how important we are to the province. We keep young smart people here. We have many going to school to become us in film and screen. We help tourism by spreading the beauty of the province and attract people from all over to see it. We share all the production money everywhere we go.

We are culture! Do not ignore us! Do not think we are not important! And do not continue to worry and hurt us. Make us feel wanted and we will continue to put more back than what we ever receive. Consult us so that we can explain how we work and what we need. Visit us on sets and in locations where the people are thrilled to see us.

Then maybe we can go back to happily working and living in Nova Scotia as a vibrant industry that will benefit Nova Scotia.

thank you for listening finally