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From: Dale Willman [REDACTED] >
Sent: May-05-15 4:47 PM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 108, The Financial Measures Act

Dear Members of the Law Amendments Committee:

On April 9th, the NS government delivered a killing blow to the Nova Scotia Film Industry.

Without any consultation, without any research, without using government facts and figures available to them, they wantonly decided they would make changes to a complex Film Tax Credit. And by doing so, Premier MacNeil broke an explicit election promise.

Why? Well, according to the government, it was to help balance the books. Hey, we can save \$18 million by cutting the Film Tax Credit program because the changes will only cost us \$6 million for 2015 instead of \$24 million.

Well guess what? It doesn't work that way.

The Film Industry is a very complex industry when it comes to finances and by cutting the very successful Film Tax Credit program that costs the government \$24 million, the government eliminated at least \$150 million in revenues brought to the province according to the 2008 figures of the government's own reports. And since 2008 there have been no studies done to include the up to \$300 million plus a year that other productions such as Haven have spent in our province.

By saving \$18 million, this government has cost our province \$150 - \$300 million in foreign (outside the province) money spent here each year? How is that good for our province?

Shall we talk about the 2,797 jobs that were mentioned in that 2008 government report. That total doesn't include the untold workers in the service industries who get hired to provide catering, restaurant meals, hotels beds, rental agencies, etc to productions.

Those workers live and pay taxes in our province. They pay income tax, sales tax, gas tax and in some cases property tax. All lost if the industry dies. And most of those workers are young people. Young people with families. With no work, they will move. How is their loss good for our province?

As soon as the budget was announced and the shock wave of the changes to the Film Tax Credit were announced, two major productions cancelled. One would have spent \$8 million in our province. The other was a TV series that could have been back for who knows how many years in the future.

I hope and pray that by now you will realize what a grave mistake the NS government has committed. You have the power to make amendments to the Act. You have the ability to show the citizens of this province that you care, make the amendments.

The best thing this committee can do for our province is to amend the act so the changes to the Film Tax Credit do not take place until 2020, as promised by Premier MacNeil. Show the citizens you listened to their concerns, that you are willing to work with them. That you CARE about the future of this province.

If you can't bring yourselves to do that, then the least you should do is amend the act so the changes don't take effect until July 1, 2016. Give Screen Nova Scotia a chance to work with the government and make the changes to the Tax Credit so that the Film Industry can continue to grow. Don't stunt it's growth by the chains you have dropped on us for rest of 2015.

Yes, the government has met with Screen Nova Scotia and hobbled together something to allow the industry to hold on by it's finger tips for the rest of the fiscal year. But don't be misguided. The changes have already sent MILLIONS OF DOLLARS in production money to other provinces.

How many more MILLIONS will we lose before this government comes to acknowledge and reverse this devastating blow to a once vibrant and thriving industry?

How many of our young talented citizens are going to have to leave our beautiful province in order to support themselves and their families?

This committee has the power to correct this atrocity. Do you have the heart and the will to do what you know is the right and responsible approach?

Sincerely,

Dale Willman