



GENERAL TEAMSTERS, CHAUFFEURS AND HELPERS

Teamsters Local Union 249

Affiliated with The International Brotherhood of Teamsters



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April 14, 2022

21st Senatorial District
Senator, Scott E. Hutchinson
Senate Box 203021
Harrisburg, Pa 17120-3021
Via email (shutchinson@pasen.gov)

Dear Senator Hutchinson,

I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak to this committee. I am honored to represent Teamsters Local 249 and the members who work in the television and film industry. My name is Keith Frank. I am currently the Vice President of Teamsters Local 249 and the Business Agent for the past five (5) years. I am responsible for the representation of the Transportation and Locations Departments on productions in Western Pennsylvania.

During the past several years we have seen our membership grow due to the small increase in the film tax credit. Our members have welcomed the growth and have been grateful for the opportunity to provide for their families. The jobs the industry provides has been family sustaining and allowing the members to save for a real retirement. The industry has supported annual raises of three (3%) percent year over year even when many employers were struggling to keep their doors open. Not all segments or divisions of our Union have enjoyed the same consistent increase in their salaries.

The film tax credit is crucial for this trend to continue. Due to no fault of the members, the industry has had a few setbacks with the annual film tax credit. A notable year to mention, is 2017. In 2017, the annual State budget was not passed early resulting

in a delay for tax credit approvals. This action reduced the annual earnings of our transportation members by nearly eighty (80%).

The drastic difference in the amount of productions filming in the region during 2017, is a direct correlation with the delay of the tax credit. The well-known quote of the movie titled "Field of Dreams," "if you build it, they will come," is ever fitting. If there is no tax credit, the productions will not choose the region as their home resulting in less earnings for our members.

The plain point, if the tax credit programs remain stagnant, our membership will not grow. Without growth, the opportunity to build wealth and real retirement for the women and men we represent currently as well as the future, will simply be flat.

The Teamsters who perform the day-to-day work on a production are from all walks of life. The common ground for all, is this industry has proven to increase their quality of life for themselves as well as the families they are supporting.

Undoubtedly, the film tax credit has been a life changing program for our members who work in the industry. Aside from those members, of our members not directly working in the industry rely on the program and its success. Teamster law enforcement members, lumber delivery drivers, water delivery drivers and school bus drivers are a few.

The employers who employ the non-direct members have realized the impacts. The impacts can push a company to record profits or in the case of an off year, force a company in the red. One employer to mention, Paul Lumber. Paul Lumber employs Teamsters to work as yard and delivery drivers. Without a good year in the industry, he sees a dramatic decrease in revenue during the years of light filming.

The benefits are a far too great to cover in the limited time I have been afforded. One additional point I would like to mention, the salaries earned in 2021 by only approximately 125 members exceeded 12.5 million. With incomes generating numbers of this magnitude, it is without doubt, our members have an opportunity to build a lifetime of wealth. The only thing standing in their way, is a film tax credit with no increase. I want to thank you for your time. I will be available to answer questions at your convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Keith P. Frank". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Keith P. Frank
Vice President