



Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor / Jack Lavin, Director

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Illinois Film Office And Springfield Excited About Legally Blonde 2 *Advanced Screening Takes Place Tonight In Springfield*

SPRINGFIELD -- Director of the Illinois Film Office Brenda Sexton, and Springfield Mayor Timothy Davlin hosted a press conference today in front of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to discuss the newly-passed film legislation and the impact the recently filmed Legally Blonde 2 has had on the local economy.

"The film industry plays a vital role in the overall economy here in Illinois. It creates thousands of jobs and flushes millions of dollars into our economy," said Sexton. "The passage of the legislation is an important step towards bridging the gap in terms of luring film production back to Illinois. It will make Illinois one of the most competitive states for film and commercial TV production."

Legislation recently passed by the General Assembly, once signed by Governor Blagojevich, will provide a 25% tax credit to film producers for the first \$25,000 in wages per person per production.

Many of the television and film productions that once came to Illinois have gone to Canada. This year alone, Illinois lost six film projects that considered shooting here but chose not to upon hearing that Illinois did not have an incentive program. At its peak in 1996, estimated local jobs created by TV and film projects numbered over 25,000. Last year the number dropped below 8,600, a decrease of over 66 percent. What was a \$124 million industry in the 1990's, has sunk to \$27.6 million in 2002.

The Illinois State Capitol was selected as the location for several scenes in the movie because its interior closely resembles that of the U.S. Capitol. In addition, many Springfield residents were used as extras, playing the roles of senators, aides, and police officers in the movie.

"Films have a tremendous impact on the economy and positively effect communities such as ours," said Mayor Timothy Davlin. "Many Springfield residents participated in the making of Legally Blonde 2 and were very enthusiastic about being involved in the production of a movie," said Davlin.

The Illinois Film Office is hosting an advanced screening of Legally Blonde 2, produced by MGM, tonight at the Parkway Pointe Cinema. The film opens nationwide tomorrow.

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