



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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Governor Announces 100% Increase in Revenue at Illinois Film Office

CHICAGO – Governor Blagojevich announced that revenues in the Illinois Film Office would be up 100% in 2004 from 2003. With the new legislation attracting studios and filmmakers, film production is expected to increase to an estimated \$50 million in 2004, from \$25.6 million in 2003.

“Restoring the film and television industry in Illinois is important to my administration, and I am pleased to see that the outreach and tax incentives to the entertainment community have been a successful first step in bringing production back to Illinois,” said Governor Blagojevich. “In the future, movies that are made about Chicago will be shot in Chicago and not Toronto, which is great news for the working men and women of our production community.”

In August of 2003, Governor Blagojevich signed Senate Bill 785, which created a new tax incentive designed to attract the film industry back to Illinois. The new law provides a tax credit equal to 25% of the wages paid to Illinois residents working on television and film projects shot in Illinois. In order to qualify, productions of 30 minutes or more will have to spend at least \$100,000 on Illinois labor. Other, shorter film productions may also qualify for the incentive. The law is also expected to enhance the tourism industry in Illinois.

“Governor Blagojevich’s tax incentive program has had a great effect on Illinois production and has been the key to increasing our marketability and success at bringing the film industry back to Illinois,” said Brenda Sexton, Director of the Illinois Film Office. “Our office has had the busiest December and January on record, with inquiries from producers up 500 percent.”

At its peak in 1999, film and television production in Illinois contributed an estimated \$124 million to the local economy. In 2002, the amount was a mere \$27.6 million, a decrease of more than 77 percent. In fact, since 2001, 18 films that were set in Chicago were actually filmed in Canada.

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