

HOUSE BILL No. 5980

March 23, 2010, Introduced by Reps. Knollenberg, Haines and Walsh and referred to the Committee on Tax Policy.

A bill to amend 2007 PA 36, entitled
"Michigan business tax act,"
by amending section 455 (MCL 208.1455), as added by 2008 PA 77.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 455. (1) The Michigan film office, with the concurrence
2 of the state treasurer, may enter into an agreement with an
3 eligible production company providing the company with a credit
4 against the tax imposed by this act or against taxes withheld under
5 chapter 7 of the income tax act of 1967, 1967 PA 281, MCL 206.351
6 to 206.367, as provided under this section and section 367 of the
7 income tax act of 1967, 1967 PA 281, MCL 206.367. To qualify for
8 the credit under this section, a company shall meet all of the
9 following requirements:

1 (a) Spend at least \$50,000.00 in this state for the
2 development, preproduction, production, or postproduction costs of
3 a state certified qualified production.

4 (b) Enter into an agreement as provided in this section.

5 (c) Receive a postproduction certificate of completion from
6 the office under subsection (5).

7 (d) Submit the postproduction certificate of completion issued
8 by the office under subsection (5) to the department under
9 subsection (7).

10 (e) Shall not be delinquent in a tax or other obligation owed
11 to this state or be owned or under common control of an entity that
12 is delinquent in a tax or other obligation owed to this state.

13 (2) For direct production expenditures or qualified personnel
14 expenditures made after February 29, 2008, an agreement under this
15 section may provide for an eligible production company to claim a
16 tax credit equal to 42% of direct production expenditures for a
17 state certified qualified production in a core community, 40% of
18 direct production expenditures for a state certified qualified
19 production in part of this state other than a core community, and
20 30% for qualified personnel expenditures. A taxpayer shall not
21 claim a credit under this section for any of the following:

22 (a) A direct expenditure, or qualified personnel expenditure,
23 for which the company claims a credit under section 459.

24 (b) A direct expenditure, or qualified personnel expenditure,
25 for which the company claims a credit under section 367 of the
26 income tax act of 1967, 1967 PA 281, MCL 206.367.

27 (c) A direct expenditure, or qualified personnel expenditure,

1 for which another taxpayer claims a credit under this section, a
2 credit under section 459, or a credit under section 367 of the
3 income tax act of 1967, 1967 PA 281, MCL 206.367.

4 (3) An eligible production company intending to produce a
5 qualified production in this state, or that initiated production of
6 a qualified production after February 29, 2008 and before ~~the~~
7 ~~effective date of the amendatory act that added this section~~ **APRIL**
8 **8, 2008**, may submit an application to enter into an agreement under
9 this section to the Michigan film office. Except for a qualified
10 production for which production was initiated after February 29,
11 2008 and before ~~the effective date of the amendatory act that added~~
12 ~~this section~~ **APRIL 8, 2008**, direct production expenditures and
13 qualified personnel expenditures incurred prior to approval of an
14 agreement under this section are not eligible for the credit under
15 this section. The request shall be submitted in a form prescribed
16 by the Michigan film office and shall be accompanied by a \$100.00
17 application fee and all of the information and records requested by
18 the office. An application fee received by the office under this
19 subsection shall be deposited in the Michigan film promotion fund.
20 The office shall not process the application until it is complete.
21 As part of the application, the company shall estimate direct
22 production expenditures and qualified personnel expenditures for an
23 identified qualified production. If the office, with the
24 concurrence of the state treasurer, determines to enter into an
25 agreement under this section, the agreement shall provide for all
26 of the following:

27 (a) A requirement that the eligible production company

1 commence work in this state on the identified qualified production
2 within 90 days of the date of the agreement or else the agreement
3 shall expire. However, upon request submitted by the company based
4 on good cause, the office may extend the period for commencement of
5 work in this state for up to an additional 90 days.

6 (b) A statement identifying the company and the qualified
7 production that the company intends to produce in whole or in part
8 in this state.

9 (c) A unique number assigned to the qualified production by
10 the office.

11 (d) A requirement that the qualified production not depict
12 obscene matter or an obscene performance.

13 (e) If the qualified production is a long-form narrative film
14 production, a requirement that the qualified production include an
15 acknowledgement that the qualified production was filmed in this
16 state **BY INCLUDING, AT A MINIMUM, PLACEMENT OF A "FILMED IN**
17 **MICHIGAN" LOGO IN THE END CREDITS THAT IS COMMENSURATE WITH THE**
18 **SIZE AND PLACEMENT OF OTHER LOGOS INCLUDED IN THE END CREDITS OR,**
19 **IF NO LOGOS ARE USED, THE STATEMENT "FILMED IN MICHIGAN USING**
20 **MICHIGAN'S FILM PRODUCTION FINANCIAL INCENTIVE," OR A SIMILAR**
21 **STATEMENT APPROVED BY THE OFFICE BEFORE SUCH PLACEMENT. THE OFFICE**
22 **SHALL DEVELOP A "FILMED IN MICHIGAN" LOGO AND SUPPLY IT FOR THE**
23 **PURPOSES SPECIFIED IN THIS SUBDIVISION.**

24 (f) A requirement that the company provide the office with the
25 information and independent certification the office and the
26 department deem necessary to verify direct production expenditures,
27 qualified personnel expenditures, and eligibility for the credit

1 under this section.

2 (g) If determined to be necessary by the office and the state
3 treasurer, a provision for addressing expenditures in excess of
4 those identified in the agreement.

5 (4) In determining whether to enter into an agreement under
6 this section, the Michigan film office and the state treasurer
7 shall consider all of the following:

8 (a) The potential that in the absence of the credit the
9 qualified production will be produced in a location other than this
10 state.

11 (b) The extent to which the qualified production may have the
12 effect of promoting this state as a tourist destination.

13 (c) The extent to which the qualified production may have the
14 effect of promoting economic development or job creation in this
15 state.

16 (d) The extent to which the credit will attract private
17 investment for the production of qualified productions in this
18 state.

19 (e) The record of the eligible production company in
20 completing commitments to engage in a qualified production.

21 (5) If the Michigan film office determines that an eligible
22 production company has complied with the terms of an agreement
23 entered into under this section, the office shall issue a
24 postproduction certificate **OF COMPLETION** to the company. The
25 company shall submit a request to the office for a postproduction
26 certificate **OF COMPLETION** on a form prescribed by the office, along
27 with any information or independent certification the office or the

1 department deems necessary. The office shall process each request
2 within 60 days after the request is complete. However, the office
3 may request additional information or independent certification
4 before issuing a postproduction certificate of completion and need
5 not issue the postproduction certificate **OF COMPLETION** until
6 satisfied that direct production expenditures, qualified personnel
7 expenditures, and eligibility are adequately established. The
8 additional information requested may include a report of direct
9 production expenditures and qualified personnel expenditures for
10 the qualified production audited and certified by an independent
11 certified public accountant. Each postproduction certificate of
12 completion shall be signed by the Michigan film commissioner and
13 shall include the following information:

14 (a) The name of the eligible production company.

15 (b) The name of the certified production produced in whole or
16 in part in this state.

17 (c) The eligible production company's direct production
18 expenditures and qualified personnel expenditures for the qualified
19 production.

20 (d) The date of completion for the qualified production in
21 this state.

22 (e) The unique number assigned to the qualified production
23 project by the Michigan film office under subsection (3).

24 (f) The eligible production company's federal employer
25 identification number or Michigan treasury number.

26 (g) Any independent certification required by the department
27 or the Michigan film office.

1 (6) Information, records, or other data received, prepared,
2 used, or retained by the Michigan film office under this section
3 that are submitted by an eligible production company and considered
4 by the taxpayer and acknowledged by the office as confidential
5 shall not be subject to the disclosure requirements of the freedom
6 of information act, 1976 PA 442, MCL 15.231 to 15.246. Information,
7 records, or other data shall only be considered confidential to the
8 extent that the information or records describe the commercial and
9 financial operations or intellectual property of the company, the
10 information or records have not been publicly disseminated at any
11 time, and disclosure of the information or records may put the
12 company at a competitive disadvantage.

13 (7) An eligible production company shall submit a
14 postproduction certificate of completion issued under subsection
15 (5) to the department. If the credit allowed under this section
16 exceeds the tax liability of the company for the tax year or if the
17 company claiming the credit does not have a tax liability under
18 this act for the tax year, the department shall refund the excess
19 or pay the amount of the credit to the company. The credit under
20 this section shall be claimed after all other credits under this
21 act.

22 (8) An eligible production company may assign all or a portion
23 of a credit under this section to any assignee. An assignee may
24 subsequently assign a credit or any portion of a credit assigned
25 under this subsection to 1 or more assignees. A company may claim a
26 portion of a credit and assign the remaining credit amount. A
27 credit assignment under this subsection is irrevocable. The credit

1 assignment under this subsection shall be made on a form prescribed
2 by the department. The qualified taxpayer shall send a copy of the
3 completed assignment form to the department in the tax year in
4 which the assignment is made and shall attach a copy of the form to
5 the return on which the credit is claimed.

6 (9) The amount of the credit under this section shall be
7 reduced by a credit application and redemption fee equal to 0.5% of
8 the credit claimed, which shall be deducted from the credit
9 otherwise payable to the taxpayer claiming the credit and be
10 deposited by the department in the Michigan film promotion fund.

11 (10) A taxpayer that willfully submits information under this
12 section that the taxpayer knows to be fraudulent or false shall, in
13 addition to any other penalties provided by law, be liable for a
14 civil penalty equal to the amount of the taxpayer's credit under
15 this section. A penalty collected under this section shall be
16 deposited in the Michigan film promotion fund.

17 (11) Not later than March 1 of each year after 2008, the
18 Michigan film office shall submit to the governor, the president of
19 the Michigan strategic fund, the chairperson of the senate finance
20 committee, and the house tax policy committee an annual report
21 concerning the operation and effectiveness of the credit under this
22 section. The requirements of section 28(1)(f) of 1941 PA 122, MCL
23 205.28, do not apply to disclosure of tax information required by
24 this subsection. The report shall include all of the following:

25 (a) A brief assessment of the overall effectiveness of the
26 credit under this section at attracting qualified productions to
27 this state during the immediately preceding calendar year.

1 (b) The number of qualified productions for which the eligible
2 production company applied for a tax credit under this section
3 during the immediately preceding year, the names of the qualified
4 productions produced in this state for which credits were begun or
5 completed in the immediately preceding year, and the locations in
6 this state that were used in the production of qualified
7 productions in the immediately preceding calendar year.

8 (c) The amount of money spent by each eligible production
9 company identified in subdivision (b) to produce each qualified
10 production in this state and a breakdown of all production spending
11 by all companies classified as goods, services, or salaries and
12 wages in the immediately preceding calendar year.

13 (d) An estimate of the number of persons employed in this
14 state by eligible production companies that qualified for the
15 credit under this section in the immediately preceding calendar
16 year.

17 (e) The value of all tax credit certificates of completion
18 issued under this section in the immediately preceding calendar
19 year.

20 (12) As used in this section:

21 (a) "Below the line crew" means that term as defined under
22 section 459.

23 (b) "Core community" means a qualified local governmental unit
24 as defined under section 2 of the obsolete property rehabilitation
25 act, 2000 PA 146, MCL 125.2782.

26 (c) "Direct production expenditure" means a development,
27 preproduction, production, or postproduction expenditure made in

1 this state that is not a qualified personnel expenditure directly
2 attributable to the production or distribution of a qualified
3 production that is a transaction subject to taxation in this state,
4 including, but not limited to, all of the following:

5 (i) Payments to vendors doing business in this state to
6 purchase or use tangible personal property in producing or
7 distributing the qualified production or to purchase services
8 relating to the production or distribution of the qualified
9 production, including all of the following:

10 (A) Expenditures for optioning or purchasing intellectual
11 property including, but not limited to, books, scripts, music, or
12 trademarks relating to the development or purchase of a script,
13 story, scenario, screenplay, or format, including all expenditures
14 generally associated with the optioning or purchase of intellectual
15 property, including option money, agent fees, and attorney fees
16 relating to the transaction, but not including deferrals,
17 deferments, royalties, profit participation, or recourse or
18 nonrecourse loans negotiated by the eligible production company to
19 obtain the rights to the intellectual property.

20 (B) Production work, production equipment, production
21 software, development work, postproduction work, postproduction
22 equipment, postproduction software, set design, set construction,
23 set operations, props, lighting, wardrobe, makeup, makeup
24 accessories, photography, sound synchronization, special effects,
25 visual effects, audio effects, film processing, music, sound
26 mixing, editing, and related services and materials.

27 (C) Use of facilities or equipment, use of soundstages or

1 studios, location fees, and related services and materials.

2 (D) Catering, food, lodging, and related services and
3 materials.

4 (E) Use of vehicles, which may include chartered aircraft
5 based in this state used for transportation in this state directly
6 attributable to production of a qualified production, but may not
7 include the chartering of aircraft for transportation outside of
8 this state.

9 (F) Commercial airfare if purchased through a travel agency or
10 travel company based in this state for travel to and from this
11 state or within this state directly attributable to production or
12 distribution of a qualified production.

13 (G) Insurance coverage or bonding if purchased from an
14 insurance agent based in this state.

15 (H) Expenditures for distribution, including, but not limited
16 to, both of the following:

17 (I) Preproduction, production, or postproduction costs
18 relating to the creation of trailers, marketing videos,
19 commercials, point-of-purchase videos, and content created on film
20 or digital media, including, but not limited to, the duplication of
21 films, videos, compact discs, digital video discs, and digital
22 files or other digital media created for consumer consumption.

23 (II) Purchase of equipment relating to the duplication or
24 market distribution of any content created or produced in this
25 state.

26 (I) Other expenditures for production of a qualified
27 production in accordance with generally accepted entertainment

1 industry practices.

2 (ii) Payments and compensation, not to exceed \$2,000,000.00 for
3 any 1 employee or contractual or salaried employee who performs
4 services in this state for the production or distribution of a
5 qualified production, including all of the following:

6 (A) Payment of wages, benefits, or fees for talent,
7 management, or labor.

8 (B) Payment to a personal services corporation or professional
9 employer organization for the services of a performing artist or
10 crew member if the personal services corporation or professional
11 employer organization is subject to the tax levied under this act
12 on the portion of the payment qualifying for the tax credit under
13 this section and the payments received by the performing artist or
14 crew member that are subject to taxation under the income tax act
15 of 1967, 1967 PA 281, MCL 206.1 to 206.532, and are withheld and
16 paid to this state in the amount provided under section 351 of the
17 income tax act of 1967, 1967 PA 281, MCL 206.351.

18 (d) "Eligible production company" or "company" means an entity
19 in the business of producing qualified productions, but does not
20 include an entity that is more than 30% owned, affiliated, or
21 controlled by an entity or individual who is in default on a loan
22 made by this state, a loan guaranteed by this state, or a loan made
23 or guaranteed by any other state.

24 (e) "Interactive website" means a website, the production
25 costs of which exceed \$500,000.00 in an annual period and primarily
26 includes interactive games, end user applications, animation,
27 simulation, sound, graphics, story lines, or video created or

1 repurposed for distribution over the internet. Interactive website
2 does not include a website primarily used for institutional,
3 private, industrial, retail, or wholesale marketing or promotional
4 purposes, or which contains obscene matter or an obscene
5 performance.

6 (f) "Michigan film office" or "office" means the Michigan film
7 office created under chapter 2A of the Michigan strategic fund act,
8 1984 PA 270, MCL 125.2029 to 125.2029g.

9 (g) "Michigan film promotion fund" means the fund created
10 under chapter 2A of the Michigan strategic fund act, 1984 PA 270,
11 MCL 125.2029 to 125.2029g.

12 (h) "Obscene matter or an obscene performance" means matter
13 described in 1984 PA 343, MCL 752.361 to 752.374.

14 (i) "Postproduction expenditure" means a direct expenditure
15 for editing, Foley recording, automatic dialogue replacement, sound
16 editing, special or visual effects including computer-generated
17 imagery or other effects, scoring and music editing, beginning and
18 end credits, negative cutting, soundtrack production, dubbing,
19 subtitling, or addition of sound or visual effects. Postproduction
20 expenditure includes direct expenditures for advertising,
21 marketing, distribution, or related expenses.

22 (j) "Qualified personnel expenditure" means an expenditure
23 made in this state directly attributable to the production or
24 distribution of a qualified production that is a transaction
25 subject to taxation in this state and is a payment or compensation
26 payable to below the line crew for below the line crew members who
27 were not residents of this state for at least 60 days before

1 approval of the agreement for the qualified production under
2 subsection (3), not to exceed \$2,000,000.00 for any 1 employee or
3 contractual or salaried employee who performs service in this state
4 for the production of a qualified production, including both of the
5 following:

6 (i) Payment of wages, benefits, or fees.

7 (ii) Payment to a personal services corporation or professional
8 employer organization for the services of a performing artist or
9 crew member if the personal services corporation or professional
10 employer organization is subject to the tax levied under this act
11 on the portion of the payment qualifying for the tax credit under
12 this section and the payments received by the performing artist or
13 crew member that are subject to taxation under the income tax act
14 of 1967, 1967 PA 281, MCL 206.1 to 206.532, and are withheld and
15 paid to this state in the amount provided under section 351 of the
16 income tax act of 1967, 1967 PA 281, MCL 206.351.

17 (k) "State certified qualified production" or "qualified
18 production" means single media or multimedia entertainment content
19 created in whole or in part in this state for distribution or
20 exhibition to the general public in 2 or more states by any means
21 and media in any digital media format, film, or video tape,
22 including, but not limited to, a motion picture, a documentary, a
23 television series, a television miniseries, a television special,
24 interstitial television programming, long-form television,
25 interactive television, music videos, interactive games, video
26 games, commercials, internet programming, an internet video, a
27 sound recording, a video, digital animation, or an interactive

1 website. Qualified production also includes any trailer, pilot,
2 video teaser, or demo created primarily to stimulate the sale,
3 marketing, promotion, or exploitation of future investment in a
4 production. Qualified production does not include any of the
5 following:

6 (i) A production for which records are required to be
7 maintained with respect to any performer in the production under 18
8 USC 2257.

9 (ii) A production that includes obscene matter or an obscene
10 performance.

11 (iii) A production that primarily consists of televised news or
12 current events.

13 (iv) A production that primarily consists of a live sporting
14 event.

15 (v) A production that primarily consists of political
16 advertising.

17 (vi) A radio program.

18 (vii) A weather show.

19 (viii) A financial market report.

20 (ix) A talk show.

21 (x) A game show.

22 (xi) A production that primarily markets a product or service
23 other than a state certified qualified production.

24 (xii) An awards show or other gala event production.

25 (xiii) A production with the primary purpose of fund-raising.

26 (xiv) A production that primarily is for employee training or
27 in-house corporate advertising or other similar production.

1 (l) "Sound recording" means a recording of music, poetry, or
2 spoken-word performance, but does not include the audio portions
3 spoken and recorded as part of a motion picture, video, theatrical
4 production, television news coverage, or athletic event.

5 (m) "State certified qualified production" means a qualified
6 production for which a postproduction certificate **OF COMPLETION** has
7 been issued by the office under subsection (5).