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Dear MN Legislator,

A few years ago, when they started shooting films on the Range, it seemed like a far fetched idea. The first movie created 60 decent-paying, temporary jobs which lasted about 3 months. 34 Rangers were hired. Helpful, but temporary.

Yet, the economic impact of a 2 million dollar film on the local economy was truly impressive. It was a windfall for car dealers, restaurants, hotels, bus companies, printing shops, insurance agents, catering companies, antique stores, banks, gas stations, beauty shops, lumber yards and grocery stores.

The next project had the same impact. Then another...and another. It became obvious that this is a legitimate pathway to economic development. The Iron Range is rapidly becoming a popular midwest production location.

With growth expected of 20 to 25% in just the next 5 years, it's fair to say that overall, the film and content production industry is experiencing massive growth. The demand for new content is huge. Most are small to medium productions who cannot afford Hollywood facilities. The Iron Range is uniquely positioned to attract these productions.

We need upgraded production facilities to lock in a steady stream of productions. Filmmakers love the area, are impressed with local workers, find the locations to be ideal for emulating a wide variety of scenery and appreciate the incentives. Upgrading our production facilities will enhance our ability to attract the larger projects.

The potential for job creation is massive. These are good jobs. Jobs for skilled workers such as electricians, carpenters, painters and more. Jobs that will offer our kids the opportunity to build a career right here on the Range.

We are not asking you to fund a pie in the sky hollywood dream. We are asking you to join with us in keeping this positive momentum going. We are asking you to invest in infrastructure to support the growth and development of an emerging industry that offers us a realistic pathway to a brighter future.

Thanks for your consideration of this bill,

Erin Ningen