

# Buffalo Jump Pictures

SENATE TAXATION

EXHIBIT NO. 9

DATE 4-12-05

BILL NO. HB 584

Senate Taxation Committee  
Montana Senate  
Helena, MT. 59620-0400

April 12, 2005

RE: HB 584

Dear Committee Members:

We are asking you to support HB 584 "The Big Sky on the Big Screen" film industry incentive act as **originally** drafted. I have been a Producer/Director of Photography in the film and video business for over thirty years. Robin is a production accountant. In the last fifteen years we have witnessed the runaway of film production from the United States to Canada, Eastern Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. We have lost work as production companies have moved their projects to those countries that are offering incentive packages to attract their productions. It has been and is a national problem.

Over the last several years many states have begun offering tax incentive programs to attract film/video production back to the United States and specifically to their states. Montana is now losing out not only worldwide but also within the United States. HB 584 will make Montana competitive so that stories like "Undaunted Courage" that should and could be filmed in Montana will be filmed in Montana. Film production is a clean industry that will inject insignificant dollars and well paying jobs into the Montana economy.

HB 584 as **originally** drafted is excellent economic development legislation. We ask for your support.

Sincerely

  
Robert Ebinger

  
Robin Hoggan Ebinger

M O N T A N A



## Montana Film Center

Senate Taxation Committee  
Montana Senate  
Helena, MT. 59620-0400

April 12, 2005

RE: HB 584

Dear Committee Members:

The Montana Film Center supports HB 584 "The Big Sky on the Big Screen" film industry incentive act. The Montana Film Center based in Livingston/Bozeman is a non-profit grass roots organization made up of Montana film and video professionals promoting film, video, and digital production as an engine for economic development in Montana. We have sponsored three annual *Rendezvous* conferences bringing together video and filmmakers, producers, writers, general supporters of the arts, studio executives, venture capitalists, executives, entrepreneurs, and Montana film students where we discussed creative ways to bring film/video production back to Montana.

We have been working with the Montana Film Office and film/video professionals to help craft incentives that will make Montana competitive in attracting and convincing producers to choose Montana over other domestic and world-wide locations. Following discussions at our November symposium with film commissioners from states with established tax incentives, we feel that HB 584 as **originally** drafted will provide such incentive to producers to bring their projects to Montana to not only employ Montanans but also develop an industry that can provide jobs for our young, emerging film students.

Film and video productions have always been a great venue to showcase and promote Montana and its visual beauty to prospective world tourists. We have always seen increased tourist activity after the release of Montana based films and videos. It is a clean industry that brings substantial dollars and jobs to the economy. It is estimated that for every dollar spent, 5 to 8 dollars trickle down throughout the economy. 2005 film production is in the wings waiting for the legislature to approve HB 584.

"The Big Sky on the Big Screen" incentive package is crafted by Montanans for Montanans. It is excellent economic development legislation. It will help create well paid new jobs. We ask for your support.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert Ebinger".

Robert Ebinger  
President  
Montana Film Center

PO Box 253 Livingston, Montana 59047  
Email: [info@montanafilmcenter.org](mailto:info@montanafilmcenter.org)

# PARK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

414 East Callender • Livingston, Montana 59047  
Office (406) 222-4106 • Fax (406) 222-4199  
commissioners@parkcounty.org • www.parkcounty.org

February 14, 2005

Montana House of Representatives  
Helena, Montana

RE: House Bill 584

Representatives:

As County Commissioners from Montana we urge you to support HB 584. This bill was drafted by Montana people and we feel it is for Montana people. We feel the economic gains received from this bill would be beneficial to all the people of Montana.

Sincerely,

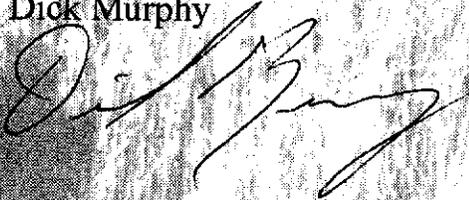


Larry A. Lahren, Chairman



James R. Durgan

Dick Murphy



# City of Livingston



Incorporated 1889

City Manager  
Steve Golnar

(406) 222-2005 phone  
(406) 222-6823 fax  
citymanager@ci.livingston.mt.us  
ci.livingston.mt.us

Chairman  
Vicki Blakeman  
Vice Chairman  
Robert Ebinger  
Commissioners  
Mary Beebe  
Steve Caldwell  
Patricia Grabow

February 11, 2005

Representative Karl Waitschies  
Chairman House Taxation Committee (HD 36)  
Montana State Legislature  
State Capitol  
Helena, MT

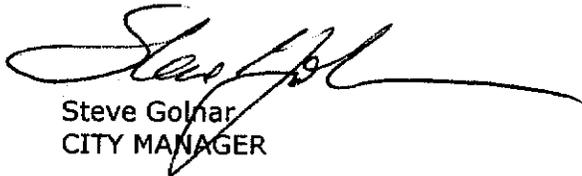
Dear Representative Waitschies:

The City of Livingston supports House Bill No. 584 introduced by Representative Harris by request of Governor, Brian Schweitzer. The Film industry is active and present in the City of Livingston and we as a community and government are sensitive to the benefits that motion picture and television productions can have on our City and State. For the past three (3) years, Livingston has been the site of the Montana Film Centers Film Rendezvous which has brought professionals from the motion picture and television industry together to share information and also to identify ways of improving the industry and its presence in Montana.

The City of Livingston supports House Bill No. 584 which creates incentives to the motion picture and television industries to work in Montana and to employ Montanan's. This incentive will bring business that otherwise would not have come to our community and/or State and it will hopefully create an environment which inspires local productions and the return of film productions and crew members to our State.

We heartily support a "do pass" recommendation from the taxation committee for House Bill No. 584.

Sincerely,



Steve Golnar  
CITY MANAGER

Cc: Bob Ebinger, Montana Film Center  
Pat Wagman, House District No. 62  
Senator John Esp, Senate District No. 31  
Representative Bruce Malcolm, House District No. 61  
Governor Brian Schweitzer  
Sten Iverson, Montana Film Office, Department of Commerce  
Livingston City Commission  
Park County Commission





**ALLIANCE**  
**DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
The Economic Development Corporation for Park County

February 15, 2005

Taxation Committee  
Montana House of Representatives  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

Re: Letter of Support for HB 584

Dear Committee Members:

The Alliance Development Corporation supports HB 584.

This economic incentive package will bring film production back into Montana and make us competitive with other states' current incentive packages. The American film industry faces runaway film production to Canada and other countries, and this bill provides the necessary tools to discourage that loss of business and employment.

Our state needs this industry and Montanans employed in film need local production. The salaries, fees and receipts from sales of goods and services are important to our local and statewide economy. The proposed 15% rebate package for employees employed by companies in production here is an incentive that will create new jobs, encourage employment of Montana film professionals and will provide job training for Montana students.

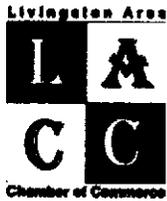
Montanans have worked hard to bring this incentive package forward to stimulate film production and boost our economy. We encourage your support of this bill.

Sincerely,



SHARON WALKER  
President

sw/cf



# Livingston Area Chamber of Commerce

Representing its membership, actively promotes a positive business  
and economic climate for Livingston and Park County.

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February 11, 2005

Montana Senate &  
House of Representatives  
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Sirs,

The Livingston Area Chamber is very pleased to see efforts being seriously considered to help entice the film industry back to Montana through House Bill 584. As you know, the Livingston area has enjoyed the benefit of having movies, television programs and commercials made here in the recent past.

Unfortunately, with the financial advantages that Canada has to offer to film producers, Montana has suffered economic loss directly and indirectly. We are very aware of the increase in travelers to Montana every time our beautiful state is portrayed on the big screen as well as the little screen. These visuals, brought to the public eye through the film industry, are some of the biggest and best wheels that drive Montana's tourism and economy.

The Livingston Area Chamber urges you to support the tax incentives in House Bill 584 in an effort to rekindle film making in Montana. We are confident that the small concessions made to encourage the film industry will surely pay for itself over and over again through the prosperity it will bring to the state, its businesses and its citizens. Thank you for your consideration and diligence in this matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Teresa Bonawitz".

Teresa Bonawitz  
Chamber President

02 1505

House Education Committee

HB#584

I would appreciate if you supported  
HB584 giving the film industry  
a tax break to get the film  
industry back to Montana.

It has been very beneficial  
to Livingston & Park County  
& I know the surrounding area.

I would appreciate your  
consideration on this bill.

East Park Antiques  
121 North K St.  
Livingston, MT 59047  
(406) 222-2177

Thank you  
James G. Lohman



Grandma's  
Treasures

Antiques • Linens • Collectables  
Vintage Clothing  
Jewelry & Accessories  
Buy • Sell • Trade

211 South Main  
Livingston, MT 59047

Elizabeth Lahren-Owner

Home (406) 222-2177  
Cell (406) 220-2939

To the Honorable Members of The House Taxation Committee.

I wish to speak to you regarding House Bill 584. This bill will offer tax incentives to movie companies to bring their productions to Montana more often.

There are 2 excellent schools for film & theater here in our state whose graduates usually have to leave to find employment. We should be trying to keep them here as much as possible. Employment figures will benefit from passage of this bill.

Finally, I as an antique dealer, have dealt with every movie company that has been in our area, including Bellings. On 2 occasions I have provided props for some out of state productions. One as a result of "A River Runs Through It" which was produced here in the mid 90's. The most recent was the Disney movie "A Haunted Mansion".

Many citizens who are downsizing often come to me to sell some of their belongings. Some of these items eventually are sold as props to movie companies as these dealers can circulate pretty fast.

Every area of Montana could potentially see benefits from passage of this bill. I'm sure all of you want the best for our beautiful state & its citizens.

I am asking you to please support House Bill 584.

Thank you,

Sincerely  
Elizabeth Lahren