

Hello, my name is Santiago Quiñones. I am a film and television producer, co-chair of the New York Film and Television Production Industry Council, and a lifelong New Yorker.

As a producer of *Blue Bloods*, a series that filmed in New York for the entirety of its 14-season run, I have seen firsthand how these incentives create jobs, sustain small businesses, and showcase our city to the world. When shows like ours film in New York, we employ thousands of people—camera operators, electricians, set designers, caterers, and countless others. These are high-paying, middle-class jobs—many of them unionized—that fuel our local economies and keep our neighbors employed across all five boroughs and beyond.

Throughout our 14 years of filming, our show created 80,000 jobs and spent over a billion dollars with countless New York businesses, shooting over 290 episodes on-location and at several of our state's world-class soundstages. Those businesses aren't always "traditional" production businesses. They are the churches we pay to use as a staging area, they are the local coffee shops that keep us fueled on late nights, they are the dry cleaners on the corner who help maintain our costumes. All of them are essential to making movies and series and are critically important to consider when measuring a production's impact.

As a born-and-raised New Yorker producing a multi-season show set in, filmed in, and about New York, it was important to me that the communities we filmed in were taken care of. Throughout the years, we also established a tradition of giving a donation to any fallen NYPD officer's spouse and family. We supported the local precinct and donated to their coat drives and block parties. We also donated to the neighborhood associations and Park Conservancies that were impacted by our filming.

During the pandemic, we were able to donate materials from our hospital set to Bellevue Hospital and others, including all our masks, ventilators, ventilator tubes and other health care supplies. Together with other local productions, we also organized and paid for a month-long food drive for New York first responders, including NYPD, FDNY, and hospital workers. And, to support the local community, we provided our hardworking crew with gift cards to purchase meals from local restaurants, helping to keep them fed as budgets tightened while supporting mom-and-pop restaurants struggling to keep the lights on.

And after *Blue Bloods* wrapped its final season last December, we've provided hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of in-kind donations of set clothing, furniture and more to battered women's shelters.

All of this was made possible because of New York's film production tax credit.

Some may say that longer-running shows like ours don't need the tax credit or that we will inevitably end up filming here in New York. However, we've already seen productions of films set in NY that film in Georgia, New Jersey, and even Canada due to the strength of their film tax incentives. In fact, throughout my career, I have been routinely asked why I never went to California. My answer was that there has always been enough work here in New York.

However, from my personal experience, that is no longer true. The same is true for hundreds of my *Blue Bloods* colleagues.

A strong film tax incentive in New York is essential to remain competitive and ensure that the economic benefits of films produced about New York actually go to New Yorkers.

An expanded tax credit program also helps to diversify and democratize the industry. The financial burden of making a film is high, and tax credits can make the difference between a promising independent film getting made or never coming to fruition. Supporting diverse storytellers not only benefits the industry but ensures that more communities see their experiences reflected on screen—and that's a win for everyone.

The choice is clear: We can either invest in an industry that provides thousands of jobs, strengthens local businesses, and amplifies New York's cultural and economic influence, or we can allow productions to leave for greener pastures. I urge the state legislature to support Governor Hochul's enhancements and expansion of the New York State Film and Production Tax Credit program.