By Senator Haridopolos

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to entertainment industry economic development; amending s. 288.1254, F.S.; revising the entertainment industry financial incentive program to provide corporate income tax and sales and use tax credits to qualified entertainment entities rather than reimbursements from appropriations; revising provisions relating to definitions, creation and scope, application procedures, approval process, eligibility, required documents, qualified and certified productions, and annual reports; providing duties and responsibilities of the Office of Film and Entertainment, the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development, and the Department of Revenue relating to the tax credits; providing criteria and limitations for awards of tax credits; providing for uses, allocations, election, distributions, and carryforward of the tax credits; providing for withdrawal of tax credit eligibility; providing for use of consolidated returns; providing for partnership and noncorporate distributions of tax credits; providing for succession of tax credits; providing requirements for transfer of tax credits; authorizing the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development to adopt rules, policies, and procedures; authorizing the Department of Revenue to adopt rules and conduct audits; providing for revocation and forfeiture of tax credits; providing liability for reimbursement of certain costs and fees associated with a fraudulent

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claim; requiring an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature; providing for future repeal; amending s. 220.02, F.S.; including tax credits enumerated in s. 288.1254, F.S., in the order of application of credits against certain taxes; amending s. 213.053, F.S.; authorizing the Department of Revenue to provide tax credit information to the Office of Film and Entertainment and the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development; amending s. 212.08, F.S.; requiring electronic funds transfer for the entertainment industry tax credit; providing procedures; providing for severability; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 288.1254, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

(Substantial rewording of section. See s. 288.1254, F.S., for present text.)

288.1254 Entertainment industry financial incentive program.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

(a) "Certified production" means a qualified production
that has tax credits allocated to it by the Office of Tourism,
Trade, and Economic Development based on its estimated qualified
expenditures, up to its maximum certified amount of tax credits,
by the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development. The

term excludes a production if its first day of principal

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photography in this state occurred before the production is
certified by the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic
Development.

- (b) "Digital media project" means a production of interactive entertainment which is produced for distribution in commercial or educational markets, including a video game, simulation, or animation, or a production intended for Internet or wireless distribution. The term excludes a production deemed by the Office of Film and Entertainment to contain obscene content as defined in s. 847.001(10).
- (c) "Off-season certified production" means a production, other than a digital media project or an animated production, which films 75 percent or more of its principal photography days from June 1 through November 30.
- (d) "Production" means a theatrical or direct-to-video motion picture; a made-for-television motion picture; a commercial; a music video; an industrial or educational film; an infomercial; a documentary film; a television pilot program; a presentation for a television pilot program; a television series, including, but not limited to, a drama, a reality show, a comedy, a soap opera, a telenovela, a game show, or a miniseries production; or a digital media project by the entertainment industry. One season of a television series is considered one production. The term excludes a weather or market program; a sporting event; a sports show; a gala; a production that solicits funds; a home shopping program; a political program; a political documentary; political advertising; a gambling-related project or production; a concert production; a pornographic production; or a local, regional, or Internet-

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distributed-only news show, current-events show, pornographic production, or current-affairs show. A production may be produced on or by film, tape, or otherwise by means of a motion picture camera; electronic camera or device; tape device; computer; any combination of the foregoing; or any other means, method, or device now used or later adopted.

- (e) "Production expenditures" means the costs of tangible and intangible property used and services performed primarily and customarily in production, including preproduction and postproduction, excluding costs for development, marketing, and distribution. Production expenditures include, but are not limited to:
- 1. Wages, salaries, or other compensation, including amounts paid through payroll service companies, for technical and production crews, directors, producers, and performers.
- 2. Expenditures for sound stages, backlots, production editing, digital effects, sound recordings, sets, and set construction.
- 3. Expenditures for rental equipment, including, but not limited to, cameras and grip or electrical equipment.
- 4. Costs of computer software and hardware, including servers, data processing, and visualization technologies used exclusively in the state for the production of digital media.
 - 5. Expenditures for meals, travel, and accommodations.
- (f) "Qualified expenditures" means production expenditures incurred in this state by a qualified production for:
- 1. Goods purchased or leased from, or services provided by, a vendor or supplier, including a payroll services company, in this state which is registered with the Department of State or

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117 the Department of Revenue and doing business in this state.

2. Payments to residents of this state in the form of salary, wages, or other compensation up to a maximum of \$1 million per resident unless otherwise specified in subsection (4).

- For a qualified production involving an event, such as an awards show, the term excludes expenditures solely associated with the event itself and not directly required by the production. The term excludes expenditures prior to certification, with the exception of those incurred for a commercial, a music video, or the pickup of additional episodes of a television series within a single season.
- (g) "Qualified production" means a production in this state
 meeting the requirements of this section. The term excludes a
 production:
- 1. In which less than 50 percent of the positions that make up its production cast and below-the-line production crew are filled by residents of this state, whose residency is demonstrated by a valid Florida driver's license or other state-issued identification confirming residency, or students enrolled full-time in a film-and-entertainment-related course of study at an institution of higher education in this state; or
- 2. That is deemed by the Office of Film and Entertainment to contain obscene content as defined in s. 847.001(10).
- (h) "Qualified production company" means a corporation, limited liability company, partnership, or other legal entity engaged in a production or productions.
 - (2) CREATION AND PURPOSE OF PROGRAM.—The entertainment

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industry financial incentive program is created within the

Office of Film and Entertainment. The purpose of this program is
to encourage the use of this state as a site for filming and to
develop and sustain the workforce and infrastructure for film
and entertainment production.

- (3) APPLICATION PROCEDURE; APPROVAL PROCESS.-
- (a) Program application.—A qualified production company in this state producing a qualified production may submit a program application to the Office of Film and Entertainment for the purpose of determining qualification for an award of tax credits authorized by this section no earlier than 6 months before the anticipated production start date. The applicant shall provide the office with information required to determine whether the production is a qualified production and to determine the qualified expenditures and other information necessary for the office to determine eligibility for the tax credit.
- (b) Required documentation.—The Office of Film and
 Entertainment shall develop an application form for qualifying
 an applicant as a qualified production. The form must include,
 but need not be limited to, production—related information
 concerning employment of residents in this state, a detailed
 budget of planned qualified expenditures, and the applicant's
 signed affirmation that the information on the form has been
 verified and is correct. The Office of Film and Entertainment
 and local film commissions shall distribute the form.
- (c) Application process.—The Office of Film and
 Entertainment shall establish a process by which an application
 is accepted and reviewed and by which tax credit eligibility and
 amount are determined. The office may request assistance from a

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duly appointed local film commission in determining compliance with this section.

- (d) Certification.—The Office of Film and Entertainment shall review the application within 10 business days after receipt. Upon its determination that the application contains all the information required by this subsection and meets the criteria set out in this section, the office shall qualify the applicant and recommend to the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development that the applicant be certified for the maximum tax credit award amount. Within 5 business days after receipt of the recommendation, the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development shall reject the recommendation or certify the maximum recommended tax credit award, if any, to the applicant and to the executive director of the Department of Revenue.
- (e) Grounds for denial.—The Office of Film and
 Entertainment shall deny an application if it determines that
 the application is not complete, the production does not meet
 the requirements of this section, or the tax credit sought does
 not meet the requirements of this section.
 - (f) Verification of actual qualified expenditures.-
- 1. The Office of Film and Entertainment shall develop a process to verify the actual qualified expenditures of a certified production. The process must require:
- a. A certified production to submit, in a timely manner after production ends and after making all of its qualified expenditures, data substantiating each qualified expenditure to an independent certified public accountant licensed in this state;

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b. Such accountant to conduct an audit, at the certified production's expense, to substantiate each qualified expenditure and submit the results as a report, along with all substantiating data, to the Office of Film and Entertainment; and

- c. The Office of Film and Entertainment to review the accountant's submittal and report to the Office of Tourism,

 Trade, and Economic Development the final verified amount of actual qualified expenditures made by the certified production.
- 2. The Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development shall determine and approve the final tax credit award amount to each certified applicant based on the final verified amount of actual qualified expenditures and shall then notify the executive director of the Department of Revenue that the certified production has met the requirements of the incentive program and of the final amount of the tax credit award.
- (g) Promoting Florida.—The Office of Film and Entertainment shall ensure that, as a condition of receiving a tax credit under this section, marketing materials promoting this state as a tourist destination or film and entertainment production destination are included, when appropriate, at no cost to the state, which must, at a minimum, include placement in the end credits of a "Filmed in Florida" logo with size and placement commensurate to other logos included in the end credits or, if no logos are used, the statement "Filmed in Florida using Florida's Entertainment Industry Financial Incentive," or a similar statement approved by the Office of Film and Entertainment shall develop a "Filmed in Florida" logo and

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233 supply it for the purposes specified in this paragraph.

- (4) TAX CREDIT ELIGIBILITY; ELECTION AND DISTRIBUTION;

 CARRYFORWARD; CONSOLIDATED RETURNS; PARTNERSHIP AND NONCORPORATE

 DISTRIBUTIONS; MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS.—
- (a) Tax credit award.—Tax credits awarded under this section in a fiscal year shall be made to qualified productions according to the principal photography start date of the productions, except for digital media projects, which shall be based on the start date of the productions.
 - (b) Tax credit eligibility.—
- 1. A qualified production, excluding commercials, music videos, digital media projects, and independent Florida films, that demonstrates a minimum of \$500,000 in qualified expenditures is eligible for tax credits equal to 20 percent of its actual qualified expenditures.
- 2. An off-season certified production is eligible for an additional 5 percent tax credit on actual qualified expenditures. An off-season certified production that does not complete 75 percent of principal photography due to disruption caused by a hurricane or tropical storm may not be disqualified from eligibility for the additional 5 percent credit as a result of the disruption.
- 3. A qualified production company that produces national or regional commercials or music videos may be eligible for a tax credit award if it demonstrates a minimum of \$100,000 in qualified expenditures per national or regional commercial or music video and exceeds a combined threshold of \$500,000 after combining actual qualified expenditures from qualified commercials and music videos during a single state fiscal year.

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After a qualified production company that produces commercials, music videos, or both reaches the threshold of \$500,000, it is eligible to apply for certification for a tax credit award. The maximum credit award shall be equal to 10 percent of its actual qualified expenditures up to a maximum of \$500,000.

- 4. A qualified production that is a digital media project that demonstrates a minimum of \$300,000 in total qualified expenditures is eligible for a tax credit equal to 20 percent of its actual qualified expenditures. As used in this subparagraph, the term "qualified expenditures" means the wages or salaries paid to a resident of this state for working on a single qualified digital media project, up to a maximum of \$200,000 in wages or salaries paid per resident. A qualified production company producing digital media projects may not qualify for more than three projects in a fiscal year. A project that extends beyond a fiscal year must reapply each fiscal year in order to be eligible for a tax credit award for that year.
- 5. An independent Florida film that meets the criteria of this subparagraph and demonstrates a minimum of \$100,000, but not more than \$625,000, in total qualified expenditures is eligible for tax credits equal to 15 percent of its actual qualified expenditures. To qualify for this tax credit, a qualified production must:
- a. Be planned as a feature film or documentary of no less than 70 minutes in length.
- b. Provide evidence of 50 percent of the financing for its total budget in an escrow account or other form dedicated to the production.
 - c. Do all major postproduction in this state.

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d. Employ Florida workers in at least six of the following key positions: writer, director, producer, director of photography, star or one of the lead actors, unit production manager, editor, or production designer. As used in this subsubparagraph, the term "Florida worker" means a person who has been a resident of this state for at least 1 year before a production's application under subsection (3) was submitted or a person who graduated from a film school, college, university, or community college in this state no more than 5 years before such submittal or who is enrolled full time in such a school, college, or university.

6. A certified production determined by the Commissioner of Film and Entertainment, with the advice of the Florida Film and Entertainment Advisory Council, to be family friendly, based on the review of the script and an interview with the director, is eligible for an additional tax credit equal to 2 percent of its actual qualified expenditures. Family friendly productions are those that have cross-generational appeal; would be considered suitable for viewing by children age 5 or older; are appropriate in theme, content, and language for a broad family audience; embody a responsible resolution of issues; and do not exhibit any act of smoking, sex, nudity, or vulgar or profane language.

Each qualified production under this paragraph shall make a good faith effort to use existing providers of infrastructure or equipment in this state, including, but not limited to, providers of camera gear, grip and lighting equipment, vehicle providers, and postproduction services when available in-state.

(c) Withdrawal of tax credit eligibility.—A qualified or

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certified production shall continue on a reasonable schedule, which means beginning principal photography or in the case of a digital media project the start date of the production, in this state no more than 45 calendar days before or after the date provided in the production's program application. The Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development shall withdraw the eligibility of a qualified or certified production that does not continue on a reasonable schedule.

- (d) Election and distribution of tax credits.—A certified production company receiving a tax credit award under this section shall, at the time the credit is awarded by the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development after production is completed and all requirements to receive a credit award have been met, make an irrevocable election to apply the credit against taxes due under chapter 220, against taxes collected or accrued under chapter 212, or against a stated combination of the two taxes. The election shall be binding upon any distributee, successor, transferee, or purchaser. The Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development shall notify the Department of Revenue of any election made pursuant to this paragraph.
- (e) Tax credit carryforward.—If the certified production company cannot use the entire tax credit in the taxable year or reporting period in which the credit is awarded, any excess amount may be carried forward to a succeeding taxable year or reporting period. A tax credit applied against taxes imposed under chapter 212 may be carried forward for a maximum of 5 years following the date of award. A tax credit applied against taxes imposed under chapter 220 may be carried forward for a

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maximum of 5 years following the year in which the credit was awarded, after which the credit expires and may not be used.

- (f) Consolidated returns.—A certified production company that files a Florida consolidated return as a member of an affiliated group under s. 220.131(1) may be allowed the credit on a consolidated return basis up to the amount of the tax imposed upon the consolidated group under chapter 220.
- (g) Partnership and noncorporate distributions.—A qualified production company that is not a corporation as defined in s.

 220.03 may elect to distribute tax credits awarded under this section to its partners or members in proportion to their respective distributive income or loss in the taxable fiscal year in which the tax credits were awarded.
- (h) Mergers or acquisitions.—Tax credits available under this section to a certified production company may succeed to a surviving or acquiring entity subject to the same conditions and limitations as described in this section; however, they may not be transferred again by the surviving or acquiring entity.
 - (5) TRANSFER OF TAX CREDITS.—
- (a) Authorization.—Upon application to the Office of Film and Entertainment and approval by the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development, a certified production company, or a partner or member that has received a distribution under paragraph (4)(g), may elect to transfer, in whole or in part, any unused credit amount granted under this section. An election to transfer any unused tax credit amount under chapter 212 or chapter 220 must be made no later than 5 years from the date the credit was awarded, after which period the credit expires and may not be used. The Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic

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Development shall notify the Department of Revenue of the election and transfer.

- (b) Number of transfers permitted.—A certified production company that has elected to apply a credit amount against taxes remitted under chapter 212 is permitted a one-time transfer of unused credits to one transferee. A certified production company that has elected to apply a credit amount against taxes due under chapter 220 is permitted a one-time transfer of unused credits to no more than four transferees, and such transfers shall occur in the same taxable year.
- (c) Transferee rights and limitations.—The transferee is subject to the same rights and limitations as the certified production company awarded the tax credit, except that the transferee may not sell or otherwise transfer the tax credit.
- (d) Rulemaking.—The Department of Revenue may adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to administer this subsection, as provided in subsection (6).
 - (6) RULES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES.—
- (a) The Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development may adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 and develop policies and procedures to implement and administer this section, including, but not limited to, rules specifying requirements for the application and approval process, records required for substantiation for tax credits, procedures for making the election in paragraph (4)(d), the manner and form of documentation required to claim tax credits awarded or transferred under this section, and marketing requirements for tax credit recipients.
 - (b) The Department of Revenue may adopt rules pursuant to

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ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to administer this section, including rules governing the examination and audit procedures required to administer this section and the manner and form of documentation required to claim tax credits awarded or transferred under this section.

- (7) AUDIT AUTHORITY; REVOCATION AND FORFEITURE OF TAX CREDITS; FRAUDULENT CLAIMS.—
- (a) Audit authority.—The Department of Revenue may conduct examinations and audits as provided in s. 213.34 to verify that tax credits under this section have been received, transferred, and applied according to the requirements of this section. If the Department of Revenue determines that tax credits have not been received, transferred, or applied as required by this section, it may, in addition to the remedies provided in this subsection, pursue recovery of such funds pursuant to the laws and rules governing the assessment of taxes.
- (b) Revocation of tax credits.—The Office of Tourism,

 Trade, and Economic Development may revoke or modify any written decision qualifying, certifying, or otherwise granting eligibility for tax credits under this section if it is discovered that the tax credit applicant submitted any false statement, representation, or certification in any application, record, report, plan, or other document filed in an attempt to receive tax credits under this section. The Office of Tourism,

 Trade, and Economic Development shall immediately notify the Department of Revenue of any revoked or modified orders affecting previously granted tax credits. Additionally, the applicant must notify the Department of Revenue of any change in its tax credit claimed.

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Cc) Forfeiture of tax credits.—A determination by the Department of Revenue, as a result of an audit or examination by the Department of Revenue or from information received from the Office of Film and Entertainment, that an applicant received tax credits pursuant to this section to which the applicant was not entitled is grounds for forfeiture of previously claimed and received tax credits. The applicant is responsible for returning forfeited tax credits to the Department of Revenue, and such funds shall be paid into the General Revenue Fund of the state. Tax credits purchased in good faith are not subject to forfeiture unless the transferee submitted fraudulent information in the purchase or failed to meet the requirements in subsection (5).

- (d) Fraudulent claims.—Any applicant that submits information under this section that includes fraudulent information is liable for reimbursement of the reasonable costs and fees associated with the review, processing, investigation, and prosecution of the fraudulent claim. An applicant that obtains a credit payment under this section through a claim that is fraudulent is liable for reimbursement of the credit amount plus a penalty in an amount double the credit amount. The penalty is in addition to any criminal penalty to which the applicant is liable for the same acts. The applicant is also liable for costs and fees incurred by the state in investigating and prosecuting the fraudulent claim.
- (8) ANNUAL REPORT.—Each October 1, the Office of Film and Entertainment shall provide an annual report for the previous fiscal year to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives which outlines the

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2009350 26-00275-09 return on investment and economic benefits to the state. (9) REPEAL.—This section is repealed July 1, 2014, except that the tax credit carryforward provided in this section shall continue to be valid for the period specified. Section 2. Subsection (8) of section 220.02, Florida Statutes, is amended to read: 220.02 Legislative intent. (8) It is the intent of the Legislature that credits against either the corporate income tax or the franchise tax be applied in the following order: those enumerated in s. 631.828, those enumerated in s. 220.191, those enumerated in s. 220.181, those enumerated in s. 220.183, those enumerated in s. 220.182, those enumerated in s. 220.1895, those enumerated in s. 221.02, those enumerated in s. 220.184, those enumerated in s. 220.186, those enumerated in s. 220.1845, those enumerated in s. 220.19, those enumerated in s. 220.185, those enumerated in s. 220.187, those enumerated in s. 220.192, and those enumerated in s. 220.193, and those enumerated in s. 288.1254. Section 3. Paragraph (z) is added to subsection (8) of section 213.053, Florida Statutes, to read: 213.053 Confidentiality and information sharing.-(8) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the department may provide: (z) Information relative to tax credits taken under s. 288.1254 to the Office of Film and Entertainment and the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development.

pursuant to a written agreement between the executive director

Disclosure of information under this subsection shall be

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and the agency. Such agencies, governmental or nongovernmental, shall be bound by the same requirements of confidentiality as the Department of Revenue. Breach of confidentiality is a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided by s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

Section 4. Paragraph (q) is added to subsection (5) of section 212.08, Florida Statutes, to read:

212.08 Sales, rental, use, consumption, distribution, and storage tax; specified exemptions.—The sale at retail, the rental, the use, the consumption, the distribution, and the storage to be used or consumed in this state of the following are hereby specifically exempt from the tax imposed by this chapter.

- (5) EXEMPTIONS; ACCOUNT OF USE.
- (q) Entertainment industry tax credit; authorization; eligibility for credits.-
- 1. For the fiscal years beginning July 1, 2009, and ending June 30, 2014, a qualified production company as defined in s. 288.1254(1)(g), is eligible for tax credits against its sales and use tax liabilities as provided in s. 288.1254.
- 2. The credit shall be deducted from any sales and use tax remitted by the dealer to the department by electronic funds transfer and can only be deducted on a sales and use tax return initiated through electronic data interchange. The dealer shall separately state the credit on the electronic return. The net amount of tax due and payable must be remitted by electronic funds transfer. If the credit for the qualified expenditures is larger than the amount owed on the sales and use tax return, the amount of the credit may be carried forward to a succeeding

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reporting period. A dealer may obtain a credit using only the method described in this subparagraph. A dealer is not authorized to obtain a credit by applying for a refund.

Section 5. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the act which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this act are declared severable.

Section 6. This act shall take effect July 1, 2009.