

## Gavin Newsom Adds \$30M to California's Film Incentives Program

Byrn Sandberg | May 14, 2021



**A**s states continue to open up and the film industry kicks back into high gear, Gov. Gavin Newsom is attempting to lure more productions to California.

The governor has added \$30 million to the state's film and television tax credits program, thanks to California's \$75 billion budget surplus. Newsom, who is facing a recall, announced the move as part of his \$100 billion "California Roars Back" plan, which he laid out during a press conference Friday afternoon from Sacramento.

"This is an opportunity for those productions, TV and others, in places like Georgia, whose values don't necessarily always align with the production crews, to consider coming back to the state of California," said the governor, taking a swipe at the Peach State and its controversial voter law. "And that's what that \$30 million intends to do."

The new funds will boost the existing \$330 million tax credit program by nearly 10 percent, allowing the state to dole out a total of \$360 million annually to qualifying film and television projects. The film commission, which had no immediate comment on the additional funding, holds various allocation periods throughout the year. Projects apply for tax credits proportional to their in-state spending.

"Governor Newsom's announcement to expand the film and TV tax credit program is great news for California," said California Film Commission executive director Colleen Bell. "The additional \$30 million in funding will be allocated to relocating TV series, which bring long-term, high-wage jobs and significant production spending to our state. To date, our tax credit program has welcomed 23 relocating series from other states and countries. The additional funding will enable us to grow that positive impact."

California's current film incentives program was introduced in 2014 by then Gov. Jerry Brown as an alternative to the state's unpopular \$100 million lottery system. The resulting program has been largely successful in keeping production within the state and luring projects from other territories. As Bell notes, the state has welcomed nearly two dozen relocating television series from other regions since 2015 — a testament to the efficacy of the program.

Most recently, HBO Max's *The Flight Attendant* and TBS' *Chad* relocated from New York and British Columbia, respectively. In total, seven of the relocating series have come from New York and five from British Columbia. "It takes significant effort for an established TV series to pack up and relocate production, so our success with such projects says a lot about the industry's preference for working here in the Golden State," said Bell at the time. ■