

# *The Daily Greenwich*

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## **Livvy Floren: Film Tax Credit Has Helped District**

by State Rep. Livvy Floren, 149th District

GREENWICH, Conn. - *The following letter is from State Rep. Livvy R. Floren, R-Greenwich-Stamford.*

Bringing jobs to Connecticut has been an ongoing quest. In the October special session, we focused on job growth and voted to reduce the regulatory red tape for growing businesses by cutting fees, minimizing wait times for permits and other significant measures. We need to continue that good work.

For example, the digital media and film production tax credit program took effect in 2006 and has enabled the state to provide \$70 million in tax incentives, resulting in \$600 million of in-state spending by production companies, according to the Department of Economic and Community Development.

The Brand Gallery, which is a global agency specializing in the creation and promotion of some of the world's most recognized Web, wireless and TV brands, is opening a new facility in Greenwich which is under construction at 701 W. Putnam Ave.

I met with Brand Gallery's CEO Phil McIntyre and learned about his future plans for the company as we toured the site. The Brand Gallery is the exact type of business in which Connecticut should invest.

The film tax credit has had a positive multi-factorial effect on Connecticut businesses. Employees of companies attracted by the tax credit have bought or rented homes and supported local tourist attractions, colleges, restaurants and retail establishments. In addition, local cities and towns have received income through building permits, conveyance taxes and recreation fees, bringing close to \$34 million into the state economy. These ever-expanding ripples spill over into new arts-based businesses such as sound and stage sets, props suppliers, location scouts, as well as completely new school curricula focused on training ready-to-hire film crews. Two of the very first rollouts for these job-creating instructional programs were at UConn/Stamford and Norwalk Community College.

Another company based in our area, Blue Sky Productions (producers of "Rio," "Horton Hears a Who" and "Ice Age") has grown from an advertising and special effects shop to a full-scale feature film animation studio, employing more than 300 high-tech professionals. This company's growth has served as a model for business success in Connecticut resulting from tax incentive programs and has helped us keep and grow jobs in-state.

State government needs to continue promoting business and jobs growth. Embracing the benefits of using tax credits as an incentive has helped us begin to escape the economic rut in which we have been stuck. We must keep the spotlight on jobs in the coming legislative session. I look forward to working with my colleagues and Governor Malloy to keep the "curtain up" on Connecticut's businesses.