



A Destination Management Company
www.islandmagic.com

February 19, 2015

Senator Janette Millin Young
Chairperson
Economic Development, Agriculture and Planning
31st Legislature of the V.I.
St. Thomas, USV 00802

*Honorable
Committee Member
other senators
listening audience*

*Bill 21-0009
"STARS ACT"*

Dear Madam Chairperson,

My name is Marjorie E. Smith, and I am the Owner/Operator of a small Destination Management Company based in St. Thomas, that has been doing business in the "Greater" Virgin Islands (i.e. the U.S. and British Virgin Islands) for the past 22 years. As an experienced operator, I have had the privilege to work with many production companies that have chosen our islands as their stage.

Over the years I have worked in such capacities as Site Consultant, Production Assistant, Personal Assistant, Scout and in recent years Transportation Logistics.

During this time I have experienced first hand, the economic impact that these production projects have in our community.

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*Atty. Alfred
344
1 Grade Studio*

As Transportation Coordinator, I have retained the services of ferries, drivers, production assistants, boat captains, security details, and cargo and equipment haulers. On a couple of projects where specific vehicles were requested I have also been required to lease specific vehicles from various car rental agencies, and have some of them detailed and tinted. One interesting story that demonstrates the depth of the quirky film business: on a recent production with high profile celebrity stars we had to arrange for a small fleet of matching mid-size luxury SUV's; all the same brand, model and color other than usual black!

Should we look at the broad picture, the trickle down effects are boundless as the business community and job market are widely affected. To list a few that come to mind:

- ✓ Taxi Van Drivers – depending on the size of the production we have hired up to 14 drivers a day.
- ✓ Personal Assistants – in addition to the ones hired directly by the production company we have hired 2 – 3 a day.
- ✓ Personal Drivers/Livery Services – when the production requires discreet private drivers and cars we have rented up to 4 – 5 vehicles for a shoot
- ✓ Cargo Vans w/drivers
- ✓ Boat Captains – during a recent project we hired Captains for the boats to move the talent and crew around.
- ✓ Gas stations make thousands of dollars per week depending on how many vehicles are used.
- ✓ Administrative support
- ✓ Boat mechanics

Other services that I am aware of as we may have been commissioned to transport or assist:

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- ✓ Private EMT's
- ✓ Caterers who are hired daily to provide breakfast, lunch, snacks and occasionally dinner
- ✓ Wholesalers, bulk stores, grocery stores where water, snacks and drinks are purchased to feed and hydrate crews of 30 and sometimes in excess of 100 people
- ✓ Lumber and hardware stores
- ✓ Electrical supply stores
- ✓ Office supply stores where lots of office supplies are purchased for lengthy productions who actually set up offices at the hotels or rent office private space
- ✓ Stylists (hair and nails)
- ✓ Clothing stores
- ✓ Heavy and small equipment rental
- ✓ Trucking companies
- ✓ Other local technicians, staging crew, and maintenance
- ✓ Payroll companies/accountants

This of course is not to mention the hotel rooms, hotel conference rooms, additional car rentals, etc.

Then, let's not forget the bonus expenditures by the crews in their spare time who go out to eat and drink, buy gifts, jewelry and souvenirs for their friends and family back home.

Bearing all this in mind, let's think also of the added value of the many TV commercials that lead up to the airing of a TV show, or the beautiful back drop scenes for the catalog photo shoots and the mention of the Virgin Island location that the shot was taken in the magazine. Music video's have been shot on location here and have the same recurring effect as they are seen on Television, Streamed on the Internet and can be seen on YouTube. Today's footprint of film will live on to reach greater audiences than ever before.

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So the end result of the value of promoting the Virgin Islands as a production venue and supporting Virgin Islands' film incentives, in my opinion, is exponential.

I urge you to pass Bill No. 31-0009.

Marjorie E. Smith
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