

Sweet Music: Revised law should foster music production in state

By Kimberly Smith
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When Gov. Nathan Deal signs House Bill 1027 into law, as he is expected to do now that the 2012 Georgia General Assembly has adjourned, Georgia's music and sound recording industries will reap the benefits of years of hard work educating the public and lobbying state legislators for a "yes" vote on the bill.

The legislation, which was recently passed by the Georgia General Assembly, contains wording that revises existing language regarding music production in the 2008 Entertainment Investment Act. The new legislation clarifies the eligibility of music production costs as an expense, which will encourage film and television production companies to use Georgia

musicians, studio personnel and music facilities to obtain the state tax credit.

According to Georgia music industry executives like Simon Horrocks, co-president of the music industry support group **Georgia Music Partners**, and



Horrocks
Georgia Music Partners

co-founder of **Affix Music LLC**, an Atlanta music licensing company, passage of HB 1027 is a welcome move that is expected to help the state remain competitive when it comes to attracting music and entertainment productions to Georgia.

"Clarifying the eligibility of music as it relates to movie and TV productions is expected to help bring additional business, jobs and revenue to the state," Horrocks said.

According to Horrocks, if a movie or television show is filmed in Georgia, the bill's clarifying language will serve to further promote the state as a location for companies

to also produce the music associated with the movie or television show, which means more work for producers, engineers or talent.



Hurt
Georgia Music Partners

Tammy Hurt, who serves with Horrocks as co-president of Georgia Music

Partners, agrees Georgia's music industry needs to be part of the effort to encourage entertainment production companies to choose Georgia.



PHOTO/SPECIAL

In tune: A recently signed law should foster more music production in Georgia, according to keyboardist Chuck Leavell and others in the industry.

"There are other states that have similar tax incentives for music. We need to be able to stay competitive with them and attract the business here to Georgia," said Hurt, who is also president of the Recording Academy, Atlanta chapter, and a founding partner of **Placement Music LLC** in Atlanta.

The result of passing this bill is that it helps groups like Georgia Music Partners and the Georgia Department of Economic Development market the entertainment credit for music to film and TV executives, Hurt said.

"Music now has a seat at the table. 'Music' is in the name of the state office that is responsible for attracting the entertainment business to Georgia. It's called the Georgia Film, Music and Digital Entertainment Office," she said. "We want the music part of that name to go hand-in-hand with the marketing efforts of the state of Georgia."

As an example of how the music tax credit's benefits could work, Hurt pointed to "Trouble with the Curve," an upcoming Warner Brothers movie featuring Clint Eastwood, Amy Adams, John Goodman and Justin Timberlake that is being shot in Georgia this spring.

"Warner Brothers now has the opportunity to record the music for the film here and take advantage of the tax credits for the production costs involved with recording the music," Hurt said. "At the end of the day, we hope to have the very same success with music as we have in film and television."

In addition the work of Georgia Music Partners, Hurt credits a cooperative effort with members of the Recording Academy, Atlanta chapter, with an online outreach program to raise awareness among its members and the public about the need to pass the legislation.

The campaign, which used the slogan "Keep Georgia's Music Industry Strong and Growing," urged citizens to voice their support for the bill by contacting members of the General Assembly.

The effort to clear up the state tax credit eligibility for the music business also

received strong support from Georgia musicians like Kristian Bush of Sugarland, Mac Powell of Third Day, John Hopkins and Coy Bowles of the Zac Brown Band and Chuck Leavell, the keyboardist for the Rolling Stones who made his initial splash in the music business as a member of The Allman Brothers Band. Leavell, who is known as a dedicated supporter of Georgia's music industry, serves as an adviser to Georgia Music Partners.

"We have seen the benefits that we have gotten from the incentives to the movie and television industries," Leavell said. "As a matter of fact, I was proud to be involved in a Billy Bob Thornton movie called 'Jayne Mansfield's Car.' Billy Bob is a friend, and I was so pleased to have him come to Georgia to do this film, and I know it would not have occurred without the tax incentive."

Leavell said with passage of the bill, the quality and variety of Georgia music artists and music production facilities will be another reason for the entertainment industry to do business in the state.

"Now we can focus on the star power of music," he said. "It can be any genre; be it rock and roll, country or hip hop, it doesn't matter. The point is to make Georgia the best place to record as well as do the pre-production and post-production."

"It's a no-brainer to do this. Music is one of the greatest assets of our state, and we must provide the same incentives for music that we already provide for the television and film world," Leavell added. "We'll see the positive results from that action. There's no doubt about it."



*Celebrate The Past
~ and ~
Embrace The Future*

Music, Maestro, second chorus

■ **Fox Theatre**

Seating capacity: 5,000

Year opened: 1929

Fun fact: Hosted the premiere of "Gone With the Wind" in 1939.

Upcoming Shows: "Les Miserables," "Tyler Perry's Madea Gets a Job," "A Prairie Home Companion," "Jersey Boys, Norah Jones, Ringo Starr and His All-Star Band, The B-52s

■ **Phillips Arena**

Seating capacity: 21,000

Year opened: 1999

Average annual number of concerts: 25-30

Full-time employees: 220

Part-time employees on concert nights: 900-1,000

Fun fact: Based on attendance figures, Phillips Arena was ranked third in the nation

for entertainment venues by industry publication Pollstar magazine.

Upcoming shows: Neil Diamond, Nickelback, Coldplay, LMFAO, Aerosmith and Madonna

■ **Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre**

Seating capacity: 12,000

Year opened: 2008

Fun fact: Ranked 14th in the world on Pollstar's top 2011 Amphitheatres by ticket sales.

Upcoming shows: Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, Eagles, Project 961 Cinco Party, Styx, REO Speedwagon and Ted Nugent, Jackie Evancho with Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Foster the People, Bon Iver with The Staves, ZZ Top, Furthur, Crosby, Stills & Nash

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