



Illinois lured \$330 million in film, TV projects last year

By Greg Hinz

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Illinois, and Chicago in particular, attracted \$330 million in film and television production work in 2015, the Illinois Film Office reported today, with 291 projects shooting here.

It's not a record—that honor belongs to the \$358 million logged in 2013—but last year's total did mark an 18 percent increase over 2014.

The work coming in is somewhat more stable these days, as the local industry relies less on huge "Blues Brothers" or "Transformers" types of movie productions that might or might not come in a given year, and more on TV shoots—especially producer Dick Wolf's "Chicago Fire," "Chicago P.D." and "Chicago Med," the NBC trio that might soon be joined by "Chicago Law." The Fox hit "Empire" also shoots at the West Side Cinespace complex.

Illinois has resumed offering its tax incentive of up to 30 percent off in-state costs, and Hollywood definitely likes that. MovieMaker Magazine certainly emphasized that earlier this month when it named Chicago the sixth-best city in the country in which to shoot, after Los Angeles, Atlanta, New York, Austin and Albuquerque.

Chicago is still attracting some big films, including "Chi-raq." And director-writer-producer siblings Lana and Andy Wachowski have been filming the Netflix series "Sense8" here.

"The film industry is an important economic driver," says Film Office chief Christine Dudley. "Illinois remains popular among filmmakers because they recognize the incredible value our state offers, with a renowned creative community."