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For Immediate Release

April 29, 2021

Oklahoma Film & Music Office Joins the Oklahoma Department of Commerce

OKLAHOMA CITY – On Tuesday, Governor Kevin Stitt signed SB949 which moves the Oklahoma Film + Music Office (OF+MO) to the Oklahoma Department of Commerce (Commerce). OF+MO was previously part of the Oklahoma Tourism & Recreational Department. The bill takes effect on July 1, 2021.

“We are excited to welcome the team from Oklahoma Film & Music to Commerce,” said Scott Mueller, Oklahoma Secretary of Commerce and Workforce Development. “Film & Music is seeing incredible success and already has an impressive economic impact of more than \$160 million for our state. We look forward to the opportunity to work alongside them to further grow this industry and its economic impact in our state.”

“Our work at Tourism has successfully brought us to where we are today, having introduced our state’s beautiful natural resources, cultural history, skilled workforce, innovative business, and film-friendly communities to thousands of creative professionals and businesses over the years,” said Tava Maloy Sofsky, Director of the Oklahoma Film + Music Office. “We see enormous value with our transition to the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, as we are proud to continue to lead and propel Oklahoma’s film and music industries to the next level. Working under the great leadership of Commerce, we look forward to continue retaining, recruiting, and cultivating business expansion and more sustainable jobs for more Oklahomans across our state.”

In mid-April, Commerce announced a realignment of its Business Development team to focus on sector-based recruitment of economic development projects. The OF+MO team will join Commerce’s Business Development division, bringing a new industry to the agency’s strategy. Under Commerce, the OF+MO team will continue their work growing Oklahoma’s film industry by recruiting film and television projects as well as companies that build necessary infrastructure, like soundstages and production studios.

The state has seen two impressive film infrastructure developments in the past year. Prairie Surf Media launched Prairie Surf Studios, the largest production facility in the region. This 1.3-million square foot facility has five soundstages and is located in downtown Oklahoma City. Additionally, in the fall of 2020, Green Pastures Studios and the Oklahoma Film and Television Academy opened in Spencer, Oklahoma. Located on a 12-acre campus, the facilities include sound stages, standing sets and training courses to meet the growing demand of Oklahoma's film industry.

In Fiscal Year 20 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020), 34 film and television projects employed nearly 4,000 Oklahomans and contributed \$32.8 million to the state's economy. For Fiscal Year 2021, it is estimated that 33 film and television productions in the state will lead to the creation of 10,218 local jobs and an economic impact of \$161.7 million. A recent study by the Oklahoma Incentive Evaluation Committee found that for every \$1 given through the Oklahoma Film Enhancement Rebate Program, \$17.04 was generated in total economic activity. The impact is felt statewide. Since 2015, at least 125 cities in over 50 counties were locally impacted as film locations in Oklahoma.

About the Oklahoma Film + Music Office

The Oklahoma Film + Music Office (OF+MO) strives to support and connect local, national and international filmmakers with Oklahoma's skilled crew, talent, production services and diverse locations which span across 12 eco-regions. OF+MO also promotes and showcases Oklahoma's rich musical heritage and connects emerging artists of all genres to music venues and businesses across the state. The division's purpose is to grow the film and music industries statewide.

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