# Controversy Surrounds New York's Tax-Credit Program for Broadway Shows



A tax-credit program in New York State, initially established to support the reopening of theaters amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, has come under scrutiny for aiding already highly successful Broadway shows. Among the recipients of the $3 million maximum subsidy are long-running hits like "The Lion King," produced by Walt Disney Company, which grossed nearly $2 billion in New York over 26 years.

Implemented by former Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and expanded to $300 million by Governor Kathy Hochul, the New York City Musical and Theatrical Production Tax Credit has allocated over $100 million to about four dozen productions since its inception. Fierce debates have emerged regarding the necessity of these subsidies for highly profitable shows versus supporting struggling productions or nonprofit theaters, which are excluded from the program.

Critics, including some state lawmakers, argue that the program misdirects taxpayer money to productions that don't need financial aid. In contrast, proponents, including Governor Hochul and Broadway industry leaders, assert that the subsidies are vital for the economic well-being of New York's theater scene and tourism industry, still recovering from pandemic impacts. The debate continues as the program's expiration date approaches next year, with discussions about its potential extension on the horizon.