

Now playing: New film law impacts the Chinese silver screen

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On November 7, 2016, China's highest legislative body, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, passed the *Film Industry Promotion Law* (**Film Law**). The Film Law takes effect on March 1, 2017.

The Film Law is the first comprehensive "law" in China targeting the film industry specifically and is more than 13 years in the making. Up until now, the Chinese film industry has been governed by a series of regulations and rules, but no top-level "law" in the Chinese legislative hierarchy providing an overall regime to govern the film industry. Passage of a top-level "law" now indicates that the highest levels of the Chinese government recognize the importance of guiding and stabilizing China's burgeoning film industry.

Broadly speaking, the Film Law is being well-received by a diverse set of business executives, Chinese film studios, academics and legislators. While no law is perfect from inception, and questions remain about how the Film Law will be interpreted and implemented, participants in the Chinese film industry are happy to see comprehensive legal guidance over the industry.

The Film Law brings with it incremental change, not a radical overhaul, to China's film industry. Existing systems of most government approvals, censorship, and market access by foreign participants are still in place. However, the Film Law makes some tweaks to the existing rules and provides for some measures to further encourage growth in the film industry. In this note, we highlight some of the key aspects of the Film Law.

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