



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

HB 426 – Places of Public Accommodation – Motion Picture Houses – Captioning

DATE: February 6, 2024
COMMITTEE: House Economic Matters Committee
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: The Office of Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

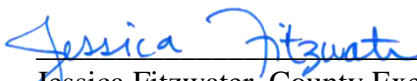
As the County Executive of Frederick County, I urge the committee to give HB 426 – Places of Public Accommodation – Motion Picture Houses – Captioning a favorable report.

This bill will require that all motion picture houses offer closed captioning for each screening of a motion picture. Frederick County is the proud home of the Maryland School for the Deaf and I strongly support all efforts to make activities in Frederick and throughout the state more accessible for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

Currently, motion picture houses in Maryland are not required to offer closed captioning for screenings. While there are a variety of theaters that offer a form of closed captioning for those who need it, these accommodations are often inadequate. These common accommodations include providing a device that a viewer may set in their cupholder that displays the captions. However, this can be extremely cumbersome as the viewer must attempt to watch both the screen and device at the same time.

HB 426 is incredibly important to ensuring all movie goers receive an equitable experience. This bill would require the use of closed captioning for all movies, allowing those who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing to enjoy the movie along with their Hearing counterparts.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 426. I urge you to advance this bill with a favorable report.



Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD