

Subject: Support with Amendments for HB420

Date: February 14, 2024

From: National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

15 Charles Plaza, #3002, Baltimore, MD 21201

president@nfbmd.org

To: House Environment and Transportation Committee

Members of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland strongly urge the Environment and Transportation Committee to support the amended version of HB420 State and Local Parks – Play Area Accessibility – Communication Boards. All children including the blind must have access to the proposed communication boards. For blind children to be included, the boards must be non-visually accessible. This term means that the boards must have tactile information in braille and raised print. The state and local governments must take the time to ensure that this is done correctly and seek the input of blind volunteers to review the communication boards before final approval. The information must be understandable, which means the raised print cannot be indented and the braille dots must be of proper size and appropriate spacing. For example, see standard below,

“This from section 3.2 of National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress specification 800.

Section 1.1 Size and spacing

1.1.1 Height

The height of braille dots shall be 0.019 +0.002/-0.001 inches and shall be uniform within any given transcription.

1.1.2 Diameter

The base diameter of braille dots shall be 0.057 +0.002/-0.001 inches.

1.1.3 Cell Spacing

Cell spacing of dots shall conform to the following requirements:

a. The distance from center to center of adjacent dots (horizontally or vertically, but not diagonally) in the same cell shall be 0.092 +0.002/-0.001 inches.

b. The distance from center to center of corresponding dots in adjacent cells shall be 0.245 +0.005/-0.001 inches.

1.1.4 Line Spacing

The nominal line spacing of braille cells from center to center of nearest corresponding dots in adjacent lines shall be 0.400 inches.”

The goal of this bill is to make play areas accessible for all children. If this goal is to be achieved, governments must have proper installation and adequate funding. Please vote in favor of the amended HB420.