

March 7, 2022

Economic Matters Committee  
State Capitol  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Economic Matters Committee:

My name is JoAnn Elliott and I am Hearing. I live in Baltimore City.

I am writing to ask you to support **HB 1238**- Open Captioning Bill, sponsored by Delegate Harry Bhandari. This bill will require all motion picture houses to offer closed captions for each screening of a motion picture. It also will require that motion picture houses provide open captioning for at least certain screenings each week.

Captioning, also known as same-language subtitles, benefits everyone who watches videos (children, adolescents, college students, and adults). More than 100 empirical studies document that captioning a video improves comprehension of, attention to, and memory for the video. Captions are particularly beneficial for persons watching videos in their non-native language, for children and adults learning to read, and for persons who are D/deaf or hard of hearing.

Most importantly, the bill provides communities with the assurance and peace of mind that they have access to the movie without using devices or other methods same as other people who go to the movie.

My personal story is the various devices used for captioning in movie theaters make going to the movies torture. Rear window sits on an ill-fitting base and reads like a scrolling ticker at the stock exchange. it is difficult to turn it on without instructions in the dark. Glasses on the other hand, are heavy and maybe were cleaned by staff. Very painful as they sit heavy on the bridge of my nose. Open captioning saves me this torture. It is a pleasure to sit through a movie with open captioning. People who can't hear so well, adults to children can keep up with the movie by using the open captioning. Same for people whose first language is not English. I want to enjoy going to the theater, and until open captioning is available in most movies, I just stay home to watch. Put the open captions on all movies and include more of the population than "just" deaf and hard of hearing; a plus for the theaters and movie-going public as well.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter and I appreciate your support on HB 1238.

Sincerely,

JoAnn Elliott  
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