

March 2, 2022

Economic Matters Committee
State Capitol
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Economic Matters Committee:

My name is Charmaine Hlibok and I am Deaf. I live in the state of Maryland.

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 story is that I want to be able to attend the movies with my hearing children - just like any other hearing parent do with theirs. Movies are not openly accessible and we are now limited to only seeing movies at certain unpopular times of the day or week because they only offer captioned movies at those times. Please consider passing this bill to improve accessibility for everyone, not just the deaf community! Thank you!

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

Sincerely,
Charmaine Hlibok
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