

March 7, 2022

Economic Matters Committee
State Capitol
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Economic Matters Committee:

My name is Shelby Abdilah and I am Hearing. I live in Montgomery County.

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 Open captioning offers parity for Deaf and hard of hearing patrons, but it also serves to benefit the hearing audience as well. Captions help close the gap when lines cannot be heard and helps English learners better follow the storyline as well. As we've seen in public spaces like bars and gyms, the addition of captioning is a benefit for everyone, not only the community it was designed for.

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

Sincerely,

Shelby Abdilah
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