

April 5, 2022

Judicial Proceedings Committee
State Capitol
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Judicial Proceedings Committee

My name is Apurva Varia and I am Deaf. I live in Howard 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 story is that when I go to a movie theater, I have to wear a big and chunky glasses that projects the captions on the glasses. It was not a good experience because I have to hold my head and try to read the words for 2 hours. That is why I want open captioning in every theaters all the times. We should be inclusive like everyone else.

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

Sincerely,

Apurva Varia
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