

April 5, 2022

Judicial Proceedings Committee  
State Capitol  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Judicial Proceedings Committee:

My name is Joseph Dalaker 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 story is that the movie theatre has very limited select movie showtime with open captions.

My story is that no one should have to jump through hoops or have doubts about whether they'll be able to enjoy a movie the same as everyone else. It is a roll of the dice whether the closed captioning equipment will work in any given movie theatre. Or that the part-time staff are trained in using the closed-captioning equipment. Or that they remembered to keep the equipment charged. Not to mention how stressful it is to have these things to worry about when a group of friends or family spontaneously decides to go to the movies. Because the onus of these worries gets put on the deaf person to figure out. That's not equal access. Just make open captions for all. (Thanks.)

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

Sincerely,

Joseph Dalaker  
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