

April 5, 2022

Judicial Proceedings Committee State Capitol
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Judicial Proceedings Committee:

My name is Teresa Murbach and I am profoundly deaf. I am writing to ask you to support HB 1238 Open Captioning Bill for the Movie Theaters in the State of Maryland.

As a person who is deaf and enjoys movies better with captioning, I wholeheartedly support this bill.

Currently, closed captions in movie theatres are displayed on a device that the patron places in the cup holder or they must wear special closed-captioning eyeglasses while trying to watch the movie. These devices are cumbersome, difficult to use, often in disrepair, unsanitary, and they regularly malfunction. I get headaches easily and my nose bridge hurts due to captioning eyeglasses being too heavy. Rather than making the movie-going experience enjoyable, they make it much more challenging. Opening captioning is a far better option for many reasons.

- 1) I would like to enjoy captioning movies with my family and friends in a movie theatre.
- 2) Almost 48 MILLION Americans experience some degree of hearing loss and rely on captioning to some extent.
- 3) Open captioning is also a valuable tool for those who have a learning or sensory disability, are non-native speakers, or have other difficulties understanding spoken language.
- 4) Open captioning ensures that millions of Americans have equal access to entertainment opportunities.
- 5) Best of all, movie theatres can offer this service at no cost to themselves or to the consumer. Today's movies are distributed with the option of running open captioning!

Captioning is already widely used, and you probably don't even notice it! For example, have you ever watched television in a restaurant, bar, airport, doctor's office, or the place where you get your car's oil changed? Then you already understand the benefits of captioning.

With so many people like yourself now accustomed to captioning on YouTube videos, TV, and streaming content, this is just the next step.

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

Sincerely, Teresa Murbach

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