



February 8, 2023

Maryland Senate
11 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD. 21401

In Support of SB 400 / HB 264: Public Accommodation – Motion Picture Houses - Captioning

Members of the Maryland Senate's Judicial Proceedings Committee.

We are an organization of military and non-military families with over 1500 plus members fully support SB 400 / HB 264, and we proudly stand in support of our partners the Maryland Association of the Deaf.

We support any bill that improves access to all public settings for anyone living with a disability. Inclusion is not just an ideal, but should be a way of operating any Maryland business with inclusion in mind. At present, there are an estimated 1.2 Marylanders who are deaf, or living with a hearing impairment.

Closed captioning is a service that is commonly offered in many consumer products today. If one can easily set their home televisions to display closed captioning, why can't the movie house operators in Maryland do the same with their operations and make closed captions more common in their movie runs & daily screenings?

Inclusion and equity mean more ticket and concession sales for movie house operators. So why would any Maryland business want to exclude any paying patron from their operation? Especially 1.2 million who are deaf or hearing-impaired paying customers. That seems a bit counterproductive to servicing the community, and one's customer base. Especially as we all are trying to help the Movie industry recover from lagging ticket sales due to the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic. We ask movie house operators to Include us in more of their daily operations and movie screenings.

We thank the Delegate for bringing forward such a positive and transformative piece of legislation. It truly will have a positive impact on all Maryland's citizens, and help to give them agency in all aspects of their daily lives.

We ask that the committee members to please return a favorable report, and to support SB 400 / HB 264. Thank you all for your time and consideration of our testimony.

Respectfully,

Mr. Richard Ceruolo | richceruolo@gmail.com

Parent, Lead Advocate and Director of Public Policy Parent Advocacy Consortium

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