



**February 27, 2025**

**House Bill 1363**

***Places of Public Accommodation - Captioning for Motion Pictures Houses - Alterations***

**Economic Matters Committee**

**Position: Favorable**

On behalf of the Howard County Association of the Deaf (HCAD), we respectfully urge your support for **House Bill 1363 – the Open Captioning Bill**, sponsored by Delegate Harry Bhandari. This bill would require all motion picture houses to offer open captioning for each screening at movie theaters that hold four or more screenings of a film.

Currently, Maryland law mandates open captioning only for theaters with eight or more screenings, limiting access for the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community. Reducing the threshold to four screenings will significantly expand accessibility, particularly in smaller and rural counties outside the metropolitan area, where options for captioned screenings are even more limited.

For these reasons, HCAD respectfully requests a **favorable report** on HB 1363.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**The Board of the Howard County Association of the Deaf**