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Committee: Government, Labor, and Elections

Testimony on: HB435 - Places of Public Accommodation - Open Movie Captioning

Organization: Individual

Person Submitting: Lore Lyon Rosenthal

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: Feb 17, 2026

Dear Chairwoman Wells and members of the committee,

I am writing in favor of **HB435 - Places of Public Accommodation - Open Movie Captioning**

I am a hearing person. However, due to my age, I often rely on captioning (at home and in the theater) to understand actors with foreign accents and/or those who speak very quickly.

I live in Greenbelt, where our single-screen theater voluntarily provides open captioned movies once or twice a week. (On the other days, they provide “rear window” closed captioning, with a goose-neck viewer – which is difficult to manipulate).

I thought it was wonderful a few years ago, that the new law required Open Captioning for multiplex theaters with 8 or more theaters. Now the time is right to reduce that to medium sized theaters that have 4 screens. My understanding is that this only applies to theaters that show a particular film more than 5 times in a week and only during the first 3 weeks when the film premieres.

This opens up the accessibility for the deaf community to see pretty much any film at any time, instead of being limited to only once or twice a week, often at 10:30 in the morning. This also opens up access to deaf people who live in more rural areas where cinemas are few and far between.

For all these reasons, I recommend a favorable report on HB435.

Thanks,

Lore Lyon Rosenthal