



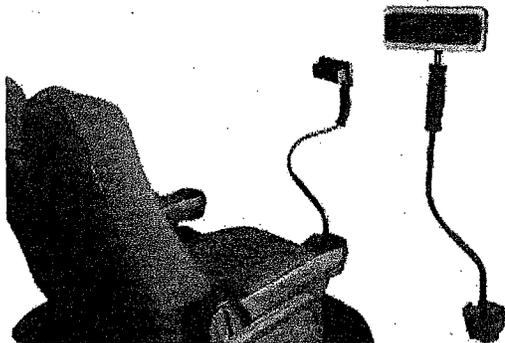
1/22/2020

Rep. Ann Pugh  
Chair, House Human Services Committee  
Vermont State House  
115 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301

Dear Rep. Ann Pugh,

The Vermont Speech-Language Hearing Association's vision is to serve the communication needs of Vermonters, and our mission is to serve the needs of professions who deal with communication disorders through professional development, advocacy, and collegiality. As your constituents, our association urges you to be supportive of H. 312 - Open Caption at the Movies in Vermont- in support of Vermont's hearing loss community which is comprised of 60,000 Vermonters who are at risk of social isolation and most of whom are elderly.

Congress must improve access in this social setting that many of those with hearing loss have found their selves far removed from. Turning on open captions is as simple as adding subtitles to a home movies. There is no cost to do this, and it would provide cinemas a fresh way to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements by providing services to those with hearing loss in addition to removing the stigma surrounding the current technology of closed captions (a personal device set in a cup holder)/assisted listening device (wireless headset). Please see image below for your reference of a closed captions option and the bulleted review of closed caption devices from the Hearing Loss Association of America, Vermont chapter.



**HLAA VT members have tested and tried closed caption devices and found:**

- Poor movie experience
- Need to shift attention away from big movie screen to small screen
- Battery failure
- Sporadic connectivity
- Complete failure of devices
- Poorly trained staff

Please keep in mind that offering a small number of open caption screenings would bring many of the people with hearing loss back to the movies, and it could also benefit those with normal hearing. Please support H. 312 to meet the needs of our community and for those who wish to have true access to auditory information without the potential complications of the current systems in place.

Sincerely,  
Melissa Clark  
VSHA President

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