



Vermont Center for  
Independent Living

*People with disabilities working together for dignity, independence, and civil rights*

February 5, 2020

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

Dear Rep. Pugh,

I'm writing to encourage you to support H.312, which requires Vermont theaters to provide showings of movies with open captioning.

The Vermont Center for Independent Living, a nonprofit organization directed and staffed by individuals with disabilities, works to promote the dignity, independence and civil rights of Vermonters with disabilities. VCIL is committed to cross-disability services, the promotion of active citizenship and working with others to create services that support self-determination and full participation in community life.

Every year, we work with dozens of people with hearing loss, including seniors, and often these peers experience social isolation. Going to a movie and not being able to understand the dialogue can increase feelings of isolation. Offering a small number of open caption screenings would allow more people to enjoy going to the movies.

It should be noted that turning on open captions is as simple as adding subtitles to movies streamed at home. And there is no cost. Providing some movies with captions would meet Americans

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11 East State Street, Montpelier, VT 05602  
802-229-0501, 800-639-1522 (voice & TTY), fax: 802-229-0503  
email: [info@vcil.org](mailto:info@vcil.org) • website: [www.vcil.org](http://www.vcil.org)

with Disabilities Act requirements and potentially create a new revenue stream for theaters—clearly a win-win situation.

VCIL strongly supports H.312, and I hope you will as well. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Launderville".

Sarah Launderville  
Executive Director