

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025**

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HOUSE BILL 677

Short Title: Open Movie Captioning in Movie Theaters. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Turner, Alston, Lopez, and Crawford (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 3, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO REQUIRE OPEN MOVIE CAPTIONING IN MOVIE THEATERS UNDER
CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Article 1 of Chapter 168 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 168-3.1. Open movie captioning.

(a) For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) Movie. – A story or event recorded by a camera as a set of moving images.

(2) Movie theater. – An entity in the business of providing showings of movies to the general public.

(3) Open captioning. – The written, on-screen display of a movie's dialogue and non-speech information, including music, the identity of the character who is speaking, and other sounds and sound effects.

(4) Operating week. – The operating hours of a movie theater beginning on a Friday and ending the subsequent Thursday.

(5) Peak attendance hours. – The hours between 5:59 P.M. and 11:01 P.M. on Friday and 10:59 A.M. and 11:01 P.M. on Saturday or Sunday.

(b) Open Captioning Required. – If a movie theater offers more than 10 movie showings each operating week, at least one-fourth of all scheduled showings of a movie with four or more scheduled showings during an operating week shall have open captioning. No more than four open captioning showings of a single movie shall be required in an operating week. At least half of the scheduled showings described in this subsection shall begin and end within peak attendance hours; provided, however, if fewer than one in eight showings of a particular movie is screened during peak attendance hours, the requirements of this subsection shall be satisfied if all screenings of the particular movie during peak attendance hours have open captioning. The showing in the same theater of two movies with open captioning that overlap in time on the screen shall count toward the minimum number of showings required by this section. Nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing a movie theater from showing more movies with open captioning than required by this subsection.

(c) Public Notice. – A movie theater subject to the provisions of subsection (b) of this section shall advertise the date and time of movie showings with open captioning in the same manner that the movie theater advertises all other movie showings. The advertisement shall clearly indicate which movie showings will include open captioning.



1 (d) Records. – Every movie theater subject to the provisions of subsection (b) of this
2 section shall maintain documents sufficient to demonstrate their compliance with the open
3 captioning requirement for a period of at least three years.

4 (e) Exceptions. – The provisions of this section shall not apply to a movie that is produced
5 and distributed without open captioning.

6 (f) Violations. – Any movie theater found to be in violation of the provisions of this
7 section shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than one hundred dollars (\$100.00) and not
8 more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for each violation."

9 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective October 1, 2025, and applies to movies
10 showing on or after that date.