

Chapter 214

(House Bill 1501)

AN ACT concerning

State Government – Human Relations – Closed–Captioning Activation Required

FOR the purpose of requiring activation of closed captioning on request on certain television receivers in public areas in places of public accommodation during regular hours; providing certain exceptions; defining certain terms; and generally relating to the activation of closed captioning on television receivers in places of public accommodation.

BY adding to

Article – State Government
Section 20–306
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2009 Replacement Volume)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – State Government

20–306.

(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(2) “CLOSED CAPTIONING” MEANS A TRANSCRIPT OR DIALOG OF THE AUDIO PORTION OF A TELEVISION PROGRAM THAT IS DISPLAYED ON A TELEVISION RECEIVER SCREEN WHEN THE USER ACTIVATES THE FEATURE.

(3) “CLOSED–CAPTIONING TELEVISION RECEIVER” MEANS A ~~TELEVISION THAT HAS A BUILT IN DECODER TO DISPLAY CLOSED CAPTIONING~~ RECEIVER OF TELEVISION PROGRAMMING THAT HAS THE ABILITY TO DISPLAY CLOSED CAPTIONING, INCLUDING A TELEVISION, DIGITAL SET TOP BOX, AND ANY OTHER TECHNOLOGY CAPABLE OF DISPLAYING CLOSED CAPTIONING.

(4) “PUBLIC AREA” MEANS A PART OF A PLACE OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION THAT IS OPEN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

(5) “REGULAR HOURS” MEANS THE HOURS OF ANY DAY IN WHICH A PLACE OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION IS OPEN TO MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

(B) ~~A~~ ON REQUEST, A PLACE OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION MAY NOT FAIL TO KEEP CLOSED CAPTIONING ACTIVATED ON ANY CLOSED-CAPTIONING TELEVISION RECEIVER THAT IS IN USE DURING REGULAR HOURS IN ANY PUBLIC AREA.

(C) THIS SECTION DOES NOT REQUIRE A PLACE OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION TO MAKE CLOSED CAPTIONING AVAILABLE IN A PUBLIC AREA OF THE PLACE OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION IF:

(1) NO TELEVISION RECEIVER OF ANY KIND IS AVAILABLE IN THE PUBLIC AREA; OR

(2) THE ONLY PUBLIC TELEVISION RECEIVER AVAILABLE IN THE PUBLIC AREA IS NOT A CLOSED-CAPTIONING TELEVISION RECEIVER.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2010.

Approved by the Governor, May 4, 2010.