Department of Planning and Budget
2026 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

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Bill Number: HB 602-H1 **Patron:** Hernandez
Bill Title: Open captioning at motion picture theaters.

Bill Summary: Establishes requirements for open captioning for motion picture theaters. The bill requires all motion picture theater companies that have five or more locations in the Commonwealth and are open to the general public to provide (i) open caption viewing during four open caption viewings in the first two operating weeks following a film's release and (ii) beginning in the third operating week following a film's release, at least one open caption viewing within 72 hours after receiving a request for such a viewing provided that no theater shall be obligated to provide open captioning viewing for any particular screening for which advance tickets have been sold prior to its receipt of such request. Under the bill, all motion picture theater companies that own, operate, control, or lease four or fewer locations and are open to the general public are required to provide at least one open caption viewing within eight calendar days after receiving a request for such a viewing or voluntarily comply with the standards set forth for motion picture theater companies that have five or more screens provided that no theater shall be obligated to provide open captioning viewing for any particular screening for which advance tickets have been sold prior to its receipt of such request. Under the bill, motion picture theater companies are required to provide contact information on their websites for receiving and fulfilling requests for open captioning screenings and advertise the date and time of open captioning screenings in the same manner used to advertises all other motion picture screenings. The bill directs the Office of Civil Rights of the Attorney General of Virginia to establish a process for receiving consumer reports of suspected violations of the bill. The bill is a recommendation of the Disability Commission.

Budget Amendment Necessary: No. **Items Impacted:** None.
Explanation: The proposed legislation is expected to have a fiscal impact for the Office of the Attorney General and Department of Law (OAG); however, the fiscal impact is indeterminate.

Fiscal Summary: The proposed legislation requires the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) of the OAG to establish a process for receiving consumer reports of suspected violations by motion picture theaters. According to the OAG, it is unclear what additional processes may be needed to receive and investigate these complaints within for the OCR.

Fiscal Analysis: Because the proposed legislation creates a new requirement for the OCR, there is expected to be a fiscal impact; however, the fiscal impact cannot be determined at this time.

Other: This bill is a companion to SB 722-ER.