



CONNECTIONS

Fall 2014

The Annual Report of the Connecticut Association of Theatre Owners

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Membership Grows in 2014

CATO welcomes new members AMC, Bow Tie, Cinemark, Digiplex (Carmike), and Spotlight Theatres.

- | | |
|---|---|
| AMC Theatres Danbury 16 | Digiplex (Carmike) Bloomfield 8 |
| AMC Theatres Plainville 20 | Digiplex (Carmike) Cinerom Torrington 5 |
| Bank Street Theatre 4 | Digiplex (Carmike) Lisbon 12 |
| Bantam Cinema Inc. 2 | Gallery Cinemas 6 |
| Bow Tie Cinemas Criterion Greenwich Plaza 3 | Garden Cinemas Norwalk 4 |
| Bow Tie Cinemas Marquis 16 | Garden Homes Cinemas 2 |
| Bow Tie Cinemas Playhouse 2 | Madison Arts Cinema 2 |
| Bow Tie Criterion Cinemas 9 | Mansfield Drive-In Theatre 3 |
| Bow Tie Criterion Cinemas Blue Back Sq 6 | Mansfield Movieplex 8 (Zurich Cinemas) |
| Bow Tie Landmark 9 | Marquee Cinemas - Westbrook 12 |
| Bow Tie Majestic 6 | NAI Fairfield Cinemas At Bullard Sq. 9 |
| Bow Tie Palace 17 & Odyssey Theatre | NAI Showcase Cinemas Bridgeport 12 |
| Bow Tie Regent 8 | Niantic Cinemas 5 |
| Bow Tie Royale 6 | Northeast/Hoyts Simsbury Commons 8 |
| Bow Tie Wilton 4 | Old Mystick Village Art Cinemas 3 |
| Cinemark Buckland Hills 18 | Regal Branford Stadium 12 |
| Cinemark Connecticut Post 14 | Regal Brass Mills Center 12 |
| Cinemark Enfield Cinemas 12 | Regal Cinemas Stonington 10 |
| Cinemark North Haven 12 | Regal Cinemas Waterford 9 |
| Cinemark Southington 12 | Regal Stratford Stadium 14 |
| Cinestudio 1 | Spotlight Theatres |

Not on the member list or know of a location that should be? Check out membership information at catoonline.org/membership-services, or phone 410-252-5010 for more information.

We need you! Together Everyone Achieves More!

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Department of Justice ADA Rulemaking

In late July, the Department of Justice (DOJ) published its Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) on closed captioning and audio description accessibility requirements for movie theaters.

Here are some important highlights of the Proposed Rules:

Digital Screens: 100% of digital screens would be required to be enabled for closed captioning and audio description within six months of the final rule. For instance, if the rule is issued in the spring of 2015, theatres would have to be in compliance by the fall of 2015. If a screen is converted to digital after the rule is finalized, the theater would have six months from the conversion date to comply with the rule.

Analog Screens: The DOJ has not made a determination as to what the requirements would be for analog screens. The DOJ is requesting comments on whether analog screens should have a 4-year compliance schedule or whether the DOJ should delay making any rules regarding analog screens at this time.

Drive-In Theaters: Drive-in theaters would be exempt from the requirements to provide closed captioning and audio description technology at this time. Until this technology becomes commercially available for drive-ins, the DOJ has proposed to defer rulemaking.



Requirements Closed Captioning Devices: Movie theaters would be required to have a number of devices equal to a percentage of total seat count in a theater complex. See the chart below.

Total Seating Capacity	Minimum Required Number of Individual Captioning Devices
100 or less	2
101 to 200	2 plus 1 per 50 seats over 100 seats or a fraction thereof
201 to 500	4 plus 1 per 50 seats over 200 or a fraction thereof
501 to 1000	10 plus 1 per 75 seats over 500 seats or a fraction thereof
1001 to 2000	18 plus 1 per 100 seats over 1000 seats or a fraction thereof
2001 and over	28 plus 1 per 200 seats over 2000 seats or a fraction thereof



Audio Description Devices: If Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) have two channels, one of which can be used for audio description, a movie theater would not be required to purchase additional audio description devices (assuming that the number of ALDs in the theater meets the legal requirement of 4% of total seat count).

If ALDs do not have this second channel, movie theaters would have to supply at least one audio description device per screen, with a minimum of two devices per theater.

Movies without Closed Captions or Audio Description: If a movie is made with closed captions and audio description, movie theaters would be required to obtain that version of the movie for exhibition. However, a theater could book and exhibit a movie which is only available without captioning and/or audio description.

Seating: Movie theaters would not be required to set aside specific seats for those using closed captioning or audio description devices.



Advertising: Movie theaters would be required to advertise in any place where movie times are listed that the theater offers closed captioning and audio description. This includes but is not limited to: on the theater website, on posters, in newspapers, on telephonic recordings of showtimes, and on marquee.

Employee Training: Movie theaters would be required to have, at all times, at least one employee who knows how to operate the closed captioning and audio description devices and could communicate these instructions to patrons. A movie theater would not be required to provide a sign language interpreter.



Cost to Industry: The DOJ estimates that compliance with the rule will cost between \$175 million and \$275 million. The average initial cost for digital theaters to purchase and install closed captioning and audio description equipment as calculated by the DOJ is listed here:

Digital Theater Type	Estimate
Megaplex (16 + screens)	\$38,547
Multiplex (8-15 screens)	\$26,839
Miniplex (2-7 screens)	\$10,586
Single Screen	\$3,198

Note, the estimated cost includes captioning hardware and software; individual captioning devices; audio description hardware; and audio description devices. The estimate does not include expected maintenance costs. The DOJ calculated these costs based on the purchase and installation of Doremi and USL devices; the chart does not take into account the cost of purchase and installation of Sony devices.

It is vital that all theatre owners understand the proposed rules and send comments to the DOJ on the potential impact to your theatres. Please contact us via email to Doug@CATOonline.org for important information on how to file comments.

Please note that the deadline for public and business comments to the DOJ is December 1, 2014.



Congratulations! 2014 Scholarship Winners



Neha Siddiqui
Bow Tie Blue Back Square
\$2000 CATO Scholarship
Nova Southeastern University

"I am so unbelievably grateful to be awarded the 2014 CATO Scholarship. Sometimes we really do not realize how expensive receiving a bachelors degree is, let alone graduate school. The support I receive from my family to follow my dreams to become a doctor has really helped me make the move from Connecticut to Florida into an integrated dual admission medical program. This scholarship allows me to be stress free about paying student loans and also allows me to focus on my future Medical school plans and of course my grades. I feel very lucky to know I have so many people helping me pursue my dreams. Thank you so much CATO for awarding me with this scholarship." - NS



Jacob Gioia
Digiplex Torrington
\$2000 CATO Scholarship
Southern Connecticut State University

"While attending Southern Connecticut State University during my fifth year of undergraduate study I have had the fortunate opportunity to benefit from the CATO scholarship program. It has been with great help from CATO that I have been able to maintain my status of full time enrollment and afford the necessary expenses, such as textbooks, that come along with going to college. CATO has helped me throughout my journey of being a special education teacher by offering me the gift of education and I could not be more thankful for their support." - JG



Wendy Yung
AMC Danbury
\$2000 CATO Scholarship
Fordham University

"I am beyond grateful and excited to be able to accept this CATO scholarship. This fall I will be attending my dream school, Fordham University, and being supported in pursuing a higher education is such a great honor; I will be sure to make the most of the next four years. Thank you again for your generosity." - WY



Jessica J. Dellaquila
Cinemark Enfield
\$1000 CATO Scholarship
Boston University

"Thank you CATO for awarding me with this scholarship. I will be using the money to buy my books for both semesters of my sophomore year. Thank you for encouraging me to continue pursuing my college education, and thank you for rewarding me for more three years of employment at my theater." - JD



Adam T. Picard
Digiplex Torrington
\$1000 CATO Scholarship
Central Connecticut State University

"I would like to thank the CATO board members for this amazing opportunity in assisting and supporting my education. Congratulations to all the winners this year and I wish you all a successful future. This scholarship will greatly benefit towards completing my degree. Obtaining an education is not received, through hard work and dedication an education is earned." - ATP



Avery J. Savage
Bank Street Theatre
\$1000 CATO Scholarship
City University of New York: Hunter

"I would like to thank CATO for such a helpful opportunity. It's hard to pay for books these days and the CATO scholarship really made things easier." - AJS



Amy Patterson
NAI Fairfield Bullard Sq
\$1000 CATO Scholarship
Emerson College

"I'd like to thank the members of CATO for their generosity and for their mindfulness of their workers needs and goals, particularly when higher education is so expensive nowadays. This kind of support for students is not only necessary, but incredibly kind and noble." - ALP



2014 Legislation Update

by CATO Legislative Advocate Linda Sobin



2014 was a crazy-scary year for CATO with numerous proposed laws introduced in the Connecticut General Assembly. Here are some highlights:

SB 287 - MAXIMUM DECIBEL LEVEL AT MOVIE THEATRES - This proposed legislation would have prevented Connecticut movie theatres from playing films above 85 db., and could have brought the movie industry to its knees. While sustained levels above 90 db for long periods of time are controlled in the workplace by OSHA, the Connecticut legislature sought to control sound levels in movie theatres. The bill was the focus of a public hearing on 3/4/14. After much work to defeat it, the bill died in the Public Safety & Security Committee; however, it continues to be an ongoing matter during the interim. All theatre operators should be aware of their sound levels and react to patron comments accordingly. Please contact us for more information on this important matter.

HB 5473 - CASH REFUNDS FOR GIFT CARD BALANCES - Originally amended to a \$5.00 limit on refunds on 4/2/14, this legislation eventually died on the Senate Calendar. The proposal was supported by the House Chairman of the General Law Committee.

SB 67 - INCLUSION OF JUICES, TEAS AND SPORTS DRINKS UNDER CONNECTICUT'S BOTTLE BILL - Proposed expansion of CT's bottle bill, died in the Environment Committee.

SB 83 - MUNICIPAL NOTICE OF ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR PERMIT RENEWALS - PA No. 14-48 - Allows municipalities to adopt ordinances requiring anyone renewing a liquor permit for on-premises liquor consumption with the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP), to simultaneously give written notice of the application to the chief law enforcement official or his/her designee, in the municipality in which the business is located. The official/designee may send written comments on the application to the DCP Commissioner within 15 days after receiving the notice. The DCP Commissioner must consider comments before renewing the permit. The law also includes other administrative requirements. This law is now in effect.

SB 96 - IMPOSING A TAX ON BEVERAGES THAT ARE HIGH IN CALORIES AND SUGAR - Fortunately, this proposal died in the Public Health Committee. That said, it continues to be debated in many local and state jurisdictions nationwide, and will likely be back on the docket in 2015 in some form or another.

SB 316 - REQUIRING THE LABELING OF FOOD PRODUCTS THAT ARE PACKAGED IN MATERIALS THAT CONTAIN BISPHENOL-A - This pro-

posal would provide information to consumers regarding packaging to avoid the purchase and consumption of items which contain harmful toxins (BPA). This bill had a public hearing in the Environment Committee, and was referred to the Public Health Committee, where it died.

HB 5197 - CONCERNING ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF REVENUE FOR MUNICIPALITIES - This legislation would create a restaurant, food and beverage tax and a hotel tax - The proposal died in the Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee.

SB 32 - WORKING FAMILIES' WAGES - Raises Minimum Wage with an 85% Training Wage - passed 3/26/14 - SB 32 was one of the Governor's labor bills. The CT minimum wage changes to \$9.15/hr., in 2015; \$9.60/hr., in 2016; and \$10.10/hr., in 2017. It does not change CT's "tip credit" allowed by law. This law allows employers to pay learners, beginners and people under 18, at a rate equal to 85% of the minimum wage for their first 200 hours of employment - the learner's wage will be \$7.78 in 2015; \$8.16 in 2016, and \$8.59 in 2017.

sHB 5269 - CREATING PARITY BETWEEN PAID SICK LEAVE BENEFITS AND OTHER EMPLOYER-PROVIDED BENEFITS - favorable 4/7/14 - Signed by the Governor on 6/6/14. PA No. 14-128. This law clarifies that all manufacturers are exempt from the paid sick leave law, it allows employers to administer paid sick leave on the same basis as other benefits, and it allows employers to determine their number of employees in the same manner as for the purposes of the State's Family & Medical Leave Act.

sRHB 5545 - AN ACT CONCERNING A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF THE STATE'S TAX STRUCTURE - A panel tasked with analyzing Connecticut's tax structure and suggesting policy options to "modernize" it met for the first time on September 29, 2014. The 15-member panel convened to begin reviewing Connecticut's overall tax structure, which includes approximately 370 taxes. The panel was created by legislation enacted during the 2014 legislative session. This is the first time Connecticut's entire tax system has been reviewed since 1991, when the state adopted its personal income tax. Members of the panel, which were appointed by the legislature's Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee include, experts in tax law, various business leaders, CPAs, and attorneys as well as a mayor and an associate professor from Yale Law School. Also serving on the panel as non-voting/ex-officio members are Governor Malloy's Budget Director, the Commissioner of Connecticut's Department of Revenue Services, and six legislators.

The panel will evaluate ways to modernize and simplify Connecticut's tax structure and administration, with a focus on stability, efficiency, volatility and com-

pliance. Four sub-committees will be formed to study specific tax types: business and excise taxes, sales and use taxes, property taxes, and personal income taxes (including estate and gift taxes). In addition to improving the tax code, the panel will also focus on changes that will make Connecticut more attractive to businesses. The panel will hear testimony from businesses, labor unions, and various interest groups, as well as interested citizens. A final report on the panel's findings and recommendations, and whether any further action is needed, is due to the Joint Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee by February, 2016.

CHILDHOOD OBESITY TASK FORCE - During the 2013 legislative a law was enacted to establish a 19-member task force to study the effects of obesity on children's health. The task force was required to report its findings to the legislature's Children's Committee by October 1, 2014. There were many meetings held by this task force, discussing a myriad number of issues on the subject matter. The panel consisted of legislators, agency heads and experts from the health and nutritional fields.

The final report made six recommendations to the Children's Committee. At this point in time, the recommendation which could eventually be of some concern to the theatre industry is one which would restrict the marketing of unhealthy foods to children. It was the opinion of the task force that corporations should not be allowed to prey on the impressionability of children. Again, the task force's recommendations were directed to venues which the state would have direct control over, such as public schools and hospitals receiving state funds. It should be noted that the task force did not reach a consensus as to how exactly to restrict the marketing or which brands and types of foods to restrict. However, the entire group believed that children's health should not be sacrificed in exchange for marketing opportunities.

The obesity task force concluded that addressing the issue of childhood obesity in Connecticut is a monumental task and will surely not be accomplished through a single yearlong task force. Collaborative efforts by state agencies and private organizations must continue in order for the recommendations of this task force to be realized. Therefore, in addition to considering their role in implementing the reported recommendations, state agencies are encouraged to contact the Committee on Children with efforts they feel would allow them to contribute most to the larger effort of decreasing instances of childhood obesity.



Not a member of CATO yet? Please consider joining the association to help strengthen our voice in Hartford.

Membership Dues are just \$50/screen/year. Membership Applications available at CATOonline.org.

Call Doug Murdoch at 410-252-5010 for more information.