

Thank you all for your work to ensure that public meetings are accessible to everyone. The ability for people to join via the internet, phone, or in person will be very helpful. The actual physical meeting opportunity is vital to the people I work with. Many of them are unable to afford a computer that can be relied upon for accessing online meeting platforms, and many do not even have internet or phone service at home. I was, therefore, relieved to see the revision to S. 55 as introduced.

I do have one remaining concern, which is how to ensure that voting members of public bodies who attend meetings remotely remain in front of their computers, listening to and participating in discussions. It would be easy to become distracted by a child asking for help, a cell phone call or text, a dog wanting to go out, etc. There needs to be a mechanism to ensure that people do not step away, miss important discussion about a particular matter, then be able to step back in and vote. I urge you to add language in S.55 that requires members of public bodies to be visible on screen during meetings or forfeit their right to vote.

Respectfully yours,

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