

Good morning Senators,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide oral testimony to your committee last week. As you consider adding the requirement for remote access for boards I urge you to exempt Boards of Civil Authority (BCA) from this requirement. While the goal of increased accessibility is important it is not applicable to the work of BCAs.

Although the BCA is subject to the open meeting law this added requirement does not further your goal.

The majority of meetings are Quasi Judicial hearings which, by statute, the public can view a portion the hearing but cannot participate. An important part of the hearing is not public. Hearings involve highly sensitive personal information - financial, medical, employment, etc. By law a member of the public can attend a portion of the hearing in person but the personal information is not appropriate for widespread public viewing.

For effective Board meetings remote access should remain optional. When a quorum is necessary any slight technical glitch compromises that quorum and the hearing cannot continue. Privacy in non public deliberations is a concern as members have various conditions for remote access.

The few other BCA meetings are usually administrative and of little interest to the public, e.g. , reviewing the Checklist yet add expense.

Thank you for your attention to this issue,
Nancy Howe,
Chair, Hartford Board of Civil Authority