

1 S.55

2 Introduced by Senators Clarkson, Chittenden, Gulick, Hardy, Hashim,
3 McCormack, Ram Hinsdale, Vyhovsky, Watson, White and
4 Wrenner

5 Referred to Committee on

6 Date:

7 Subject: General provisions; general rights; Open Meeting Law; electronic
8 meetings

9 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to amend the
10 Open Meeting Law to authorize public bodies to meet through electronic
11 means without designating a physical meeting location.

12 An act relating to authorizing public bodies to meet electronically under
13 Vermont's Open Meeting Law

14 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

15 Sec. 1. 1 V.S.A. § 312 is amended to read:

16 § 312. RIGHT TO ATTEND MEETINGS OF PUBLIC AGENCIES

17 (a)(1) All meetings of a public body are declared to be open to the public at
18 all times, except as provided in section 313 of this title. No resolution, rule,
19 regulation, appointment, or formal action shall be considered binding except as
20 taken or made at such open meeting, except as provided under subdivision

1 313(a)(2) of this title. A meeting of a public body is subject to the public
2 accommodation requirements of 9 V.S.A. chapter 139. A public body shall
3 electronically record all public hearings held to provide a forum for public
4 comment on a proposed rule, pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 840. The public shall
5 have access to copies of such electronic recordings as described in section
6 316 of this title.

7 (2) Participation in meetings through electronic or other means.

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9 (D) If a quorum or more of the members of a public body attend a
10 meeting without being physically present at a designated meeting location, the
11 ~~agenda required under subsection (d) of this section shall designate at least one~~
12 ~~physical location where a member of the public can attend and participate in~~
13 ~~the meeting. At least one member of the public body, or at least one staff or~~
14 ~~designee of the public body, shall be physically present at each designated~~
15 ~~meeting location.~~ public body shall:

16 (i) use technology that permits the attendance of the public
17 through electronic or other means;

18 (ii) allow the public to access the meeting by telephone; and

19 (iii) post information that enables the public to directly access and
20 participate in meetings electronically and include this information in the
21 published agenda for each meeting.

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(d)(1) At least 48 hours prior to a regular meeting, and at least 24 hours

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prior to a special meeting, a meeting agenda shall be:

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(B) in the case of a municipal public body, posted in or near the

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municipal office and in at least two other electronic locations or designated

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public places in the municipality.

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Sec. 2. REPEAL

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1 V.S.A. § 312a (meetings of public bodies; state of emergency) is repealed.

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Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

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This act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.