



TO: Senate Government Operations Committee

FROM: Sue Ceglowski, Executive Director, Vermont School Boards Association

RE: Draft 4.2 of S.55

DATE: February 27, 2024

Good afternoon. I am Sue Ceglowski, Executive Director of the Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA). Thank you for the opportunity to testify on draft 4.2 of S.55.

We appreciate the Senate Government Operations Committee's work on this bill and the revisions in response to testimony. VSBA supports draft 4.2 of the bill and we look forward to having representatives serve on the Working Group set up by this bill.

Transparency, accountability, accessibility and participation in school board's public meetings and elections are of the utmost importance. One of the six key areas of school boards' work is engaging the community and establishing a vision for the school district. Our training resources for school boards stress the importance of connecting with community stakeholders in a variety of settings and contexts in order to keep the community engaged in the ongoing work of the district.

The Fall 2023 VSBA/VSA Annual Conference included a workshop provided by the Secretary of State and Deputy Secretary of State on the Open Meeting Law with a focus on conducting accessible and inclusive meetings. We are committed to continuing our work in this area and appreciate having the time to work with any school boards that do not currently have the capacity to hold hybrid meetings or hold effective hybrid meetings.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on S.55 throughout your committee's work on the bill.