

From: **Ann Smith** <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>

Date: Sun, Nov 29, 2020 at 11:18 AM

Subject: Support of Electronic Meeting Changes

To: <foiacouncil@dls.virginia.gov>

FOIA Council,

Thank you for your service on the FOIA Council, what an important topic to represent. I too feel it is important to make public service (whether elected or appointed) more accessible for all Virginians, so that we may achieve more representative, effective public policy and do so as safely as possible. As a member of the public, I benefit from a government that reflects my community and includes a diversity of voices and experiences.

I support removing the Commonwealth-imposed limit on individual electronic participation by members of a public body. If you choose to recommend a more modest change this year, such as the Subcommittee's recommendation, I urge you to remove the word "serious" in reference to a family member's medical condition that qualifies for an allowable reason for electronic participation. The definition of "serious" is unclear. I believe that members of public bodies should be able to care for family members when needed.

It is also imperative that you codify the authority of public bodies to address any subject during emergency electronic meetings. I feel it is justly reasonable to expect my government to be able to work for me during an emergency. Today's technology advances allows this to be a reasonable replacement for face to face meetings during challenging times.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this request.

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