

From: **julie jakopic** <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>
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Subject: Expand flexibility for electronic participation
To: <foiacouncil@dls.virginia.gov>

FOIA Council,

I am Julie Jakopic and I live in the city of Alexandria. While I am not currently a member of a public body, I have served on two public commissions for a total of 15 years. I think it's important that those who are able to participate electronically to participate. The public benefits from a government, including advisory bodies, that reflects its population and includes a diversity of voices and experiences, including those who have children, aging parents, and/or have jobs that require travel. Over this year, we have learned how effective it can be for people to participate in meetings virtually.

I urge you to vote this year to remove any state-level limit for how often a member may participate electronically and to allow public bodies to address any subject during emergency electronic meetings. I would also like you to study in 2021 how there can be further increased flexibility for meeting electronically even when there is not an emergency.

julie jakopic
julie@iledstratgies.com

alexandria, Virginia 22305