

From: **Alyia Gaskins** <[info@sg.actionnetwork.org](mailto:info@sg.actionnetwork.org)>  
Date: Wed, Jun 16, 2021 at 12:02 PM  
Subject: Please Support Electronic Meeting Changes  
To: <[foiacouncil@dls.virginia.gov](mailto:foiacouncil@dls.virginia.gov)>

Dear FOIA Council,

I serve on an appointed board and would like to see flexibility for public bodies to hold electronic meetings outside of an emergency, as a majority of other states allow.

We have seen participation increase - both by members of the public and members of our board - during the shift to virtual meetings. The opportunity to hold electronic meetings removes barriers to participation including transportation and childcare. Removing such barriers leads to a more equitable and transparent government.

Flexibility for electronic meetings would also allow boards to respond to urgent issues and have more effective subcommittees. Executive Committees and subcommittees can not currently meet electronically and scheduling additional in-person meetings can prove difficult; however, the ability to hold such meetings electronically (while still maintaining proper noticing requirements) would help us fulfill our mission and serve the public better.

Please help us be more effective, transparent, and accessible by recommending to the General Assembly that other public bodies be granted flexibility to meet electronically outside of a declared emergency.

Sincerely,  
Alyia Gaskins