

From: **Alyia Gaskins** <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>
Date: Thu, Nov 5, 2020 at 8:18 PM
Subject: Expand flexibility for electronic participation
To: <foiacouncil@dls.virginia.gov>

FOIA Council,

My name is Alyia Gaskins. I live in Alexandria. I am a member of the Alexandria Transportation Commission. It is essential for leaders to act in the best interest of the people and they cannot do that if they are unable to hear the opinions and perspectives of the people they serve. 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.

Almost all residents appointed to serve on local/regional Boards and Commissions are volunteers who give their time and expertise to make our communities better. Together, we can make it easier for local leaders to participate in meetings and help to shape a better future for our Commonwealth.

Sincerely,
Alyia Gaskins

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