

From: **Drew Meren** <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>

Date: Sun, Nov 29, 2020 at 6:00 PM

Subject: Committee Appointee & Spouse of Elected Official Supports Electronic Meeting Changes

To: <foiacouncil@dls.virginia.gov>

FOIA Council,

Hello!

As an appointed member of a local town commission and the spouse of an elected school board member in Virginia, I strongly ask that you update law and codification to allow for more flexible and current meeting rules.

While meeting virtually during the pandemic is necessary, the flexibility of being able to participate virtually at all times is something that is a critical tool for public servants like my wife and me. We've seen this year that virtual meeting participation by elected officials and appointees works - we have months of proof.

Please approve the change to the law to increase allowable attendance virtually to 25% - at a minimum - when a physical quorum is present. Furthermore, please allow caring for a sick family member to be an allowable reason for virtual participation - this should be stated generally, without the word "serious" qualifying the medical need or illness. Again, proof from this year shows that our public officials and appointees perform their duties even with additional flexibilities. My wife and I are committed to our duties, and as parents with young children, we need all the help possible to meet our commitments to family and community.

Please join the dozens of other states that allow this kind of meeting flexibility. It's time. Let's get into the modern age of tele-working.

Thank you very much for your consideration and work.

Sincerely,

Andrew Meren

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