

Good Evening,

I am writing to you regarding the upcoming subcommittee discussion regarding House Bill 321 on Tuesday, October 20, 2020.

As a former City Councilmember, I would like to see more flexibility in virtual meeting participation options by an elected member of a governing body or an appointed board member or commissioner.

Virtual meetings have simply come a long way. During this pandemic, we have seen great strides in the effectiveness of electronic meetings. This includes broader knowledge of the tools available to conduct electronic meetings, participants have become more comfortable with speaking up in this format, and true dialogues, deliberations and decisions are taking place in virtual formats all over the world.

In addition, across Virginia, we see local jurisdictions diligently working to ensure there is diversity across all Boards and Commissions. I truly believe that with more flexibility we create stronger communities with more committed (and representative) leaders.

In conclusion, re-examining Virginia's rules on virtual meeting participation is a key component to ensuring we are creating space and not creating barriers for local leaders.

Thank you for your consideration and service!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Passey  
Former City of Fairfax Councilmember