

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMISSION
STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF HB 5029
AN ACT CONCERNING THE ETHICS CODE FOR GOVERNMENT
OFFICIALS.**

Section 3. of this bill would amend the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to require all public agencies to post on their official web sites their notices of special meetings, at least twenty-four hours prior to the special meeting, and minutes of meetings no later than seven days after the session to which such minutes refer. Such sections would also require state agencies to post their regular meeting schedules on their official websites.

The Commission believes that posting these documents on agency web sites will enhance government transparency and increase citizen awareness of their government. By requiring such postings, citizens will not have to physically go the agency's place of business to learn that public meetings are going to take place or what transpired at a particular meeting.

The FOI Commission would like to make the Committee aware of one small issue. While the number of public agencies that do not have official web sites is dwindling, there are some that do not. The towns of Lisbon, Morris, North Canaan, Scotland, Sharon, Union and Warren, for example, do not have official municipal web sites at present. The bill could be interpreted as requiring those municipalities to establish web sites.

The Commission believes that the web posting provisions of this bill are an important step in providing government meeting information in a significantly more convenient form and reflect the ubiquitous use of the world wide web today in disseminating information.

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