
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 6906

AN ACT CONCERNING MEMBER PARTICIPATION DURING REMOTE AND HYBRID MUNICIPAL PUBLIC AGENCY MEETINGS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

SUMMARY

This bill requires that any member of a municipal public agency participating in a public meeting through electronic means be visible when speaking during a debate or casting a vote.

The bill applies to members of the following bodies:

1. municipal boards of selectmen, city councils, boards of representatives, or equivalent legislative bodies except for town meetings;
2. local or regional boards of education;
3. boards of finance or equivalent boards with budget-making authority;
4. zoning commissions or combined planning and zoning commissions;
5. boards of ethics, charter revision commissions, police commissions, fire commissions or inland wetlands or equivalent commissions; and
6. zoning boards of appeals.

The Freedom of Information Act generally requires public agencies to make their meetings, other than executive sessions, open to the public. Existing law allows public agencies to hold publicly accessible meetings through electronic equipment (e.g., by telephone, video, or

other conferencing platforms) or electronic equipment combined with an in-person meeting (hybrid meetings). (Presumably, the bill's visibility requirement prohibits municipal public agency members from participating solely by telephone if they are speaking during a debate or casting a vote.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2023

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 16 Nay 2 (03/27/2023)