

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6906

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

Title: OF INFORMATION ACT.

Vote Date: 03/27/2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/20/2023

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Administration and Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill aims to amend an existing section of the general statutes to allow public agencies, such as municipal boards and commissions, to hold public meetings that are accessible to the public via electronic equipment or a combination of electronic and in-person meetings. The bill requires public agencies to provide direct notification and post a notice at least 48 hours before a public meeting, and to post the agenda for the meeting not less than 24 hours prior to the meeting. The notice and agenda must provide instructions for the public to attend and participate in the meeting, whether by electronic equipment or in person, and must be posted in accordance with the provisions of section 1-225. If a public agency holds a meeting solely by means of electronic equipment, the agency must provide any member of the public with the necessary equipment to attend the meeting in real-time and ensure that the meeting is recorded or transcribed, excluding any executive sessions, and posted on the agency's website.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Colleen M. Murphy, Executive Director and General Counsel, Freedom of Information Commission:](#) Supports this bill but with amendment recommendations

The FOI Commission believes that House Bill 6906 aims to promote accountability and transparency when public meetings are conducted remotely. The Commission supports that goal but believes that the bill should be amended to ensure clarity and consistency with other provisions of the FOI Act. See written testimony for recommendation details.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

None expressed

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

[Anna Posniak, Town Clerk of Windsor, & Co-Chair of the Legislative Committee for Connecticut Town Clerks Association:](#)

The CTCA opposes the bill, as currently drafted, as it would provide minor parties an extended period of nine days while hindering the town clerk's ability to create the ballot and further pressuring our two printers with printing and delivering ballots in advance of the statutory deadline for issuing absentee ballots. We respectfully urge the committee to consider an amendment that would change the deadline for minor parties to file their list of nominations from sixty-two days (62) to not later than the Friday following the second Tuesday in August.

[Anonymous #1:](#)

I oppose all these bills because they are all bad. The election was fraudulent, and we the people of CT are NOT being represented by our "elected" officials. We live in a banana republic and in a communist state that's run by a corrupt supermajority who doesn't care about its constituents or their rights.

[Anonymous #2:](#)

I oppose these bills. It's nonsense and need to back to common sense!!

Reported by: Robert Mayne

Date: 03-27-2023