

Department of Planning and Budget

2022 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: HB444

House of Origin	<input type="checkbox"/> Introduced	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Engrossed
Second House	<input type="checkbox"/> In Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enrolled

2. Patron: Elizabeth B. Bennett-Parker

3. Committee: Passed Both Houses

4. Title: Virginia Freedom of Information Act; meetings conducted through electronic meetings.

5. Summary: Amends existing provisions concerning electronic meetings held during declared states of emergency by repealing the provisions that are specific to regional and state public bodies and removes certain requirements that public bodies and members must complete before being allowed to hold or participate in an electronic meeting during such states of emergency. The bill allows all public bodies other than local governing bodies, local school boards, planning commissions, architectural review boards, zoning appeals boards, and boards with the authority to deny, revoke, or suspend a professional or occupational license to conduct all-virtual public meetings during situations other than declared states of emergency where all of the members who participate do so remotely and that the public may access through electronic communications means. Definitions, procedural requirements, and limitations for all-virtual public meetings are set forth in the bill, along with technical amendments. The bill also requires the Freedom of Information Advisory Council to convene a work group, no later than May 1, 2022, to develop recommendations for best practices for public bodies holding all-virtual public meetings. This bill has a delayed effective date of September 1, 2022.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: No.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: No Impact.

8. Fiscal Implications: The provisions of this bill are not expected to create an additional fiscal impact on state agencies.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: All state agencies and other public bodies covered by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments:

Date: 3/21/2022