

2020 SESSION

LEGISLATION NOT PREPARED BY DLS
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20110224D

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 219

Offered April 22, 2020

Amending and readopting Rule 4 of the Rules of the House of Delegates, pertaining to conducting a session of the House, or a committee meeting, by electronic communication means during a disaster or other emergency.

Patron—Herring

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Rule 4 of the Rules of the House of Delegates is amended and readopted as follows:

I. Organization.

The Speaker.

Rule 4. The Speaker will have a general direction of the House Chamber with power, in case of disturbance or disorderly conduct in such part thereof as may be appropriated to spectators, to have the same cleared. Representatives of news media, wishing to report the proceedings of the House, may be admitted by the Speaker, who will assign them to such places in the House Chamber as shall not interfere with the convenience of the members.

In the event of a disaster, natural or otherwise, or other emergency circumstance, the Speaker may convene the House in a location other than the House Chamber, *or may convene the House by electronic communication means to conduct business. During the pendency of such disaster or other emergency circumstance, a session of the House may be conducted by electronic communication means without any requirement that a quorum be physically assembled in a single location. By adoption of a motion to reconvene to a session date and time to be conducted by electronic communication means, such session of the House shall be conducted by electronic communication means. "Electronic communication" means the use of technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities to transmit or receive information.*

A member participating in a session of the House conducted by electronic communication means shall be deemed to be in attendance for purposes of the quorum requirements under Article IV, Section 8 of the Constitution of Virginia or any other provision of the Constitution, regardless of where the member is physically located. A member participating in a session of the House conducted by electronic communication means shall be deemed to be present for any voting requirement under the Constitution of Virginia and may vote on any matter taken up by the House, regardless of where the member is physically located. A member participating by electronic communication means shall not be required to open her physical location to the public or the media.

The Speaker shall establish any necessary procedures for conducting a session of the House by electronic communication means.

The Clerk shall determine the methods of electronic communication for any session of the House conducted by electronic communication means, provided that such methods enable a member participating by electronic communication means to hear or read the session proceedings as the proceedings are occurring and enable other members physically present or participating by electronic communication means to hear or read the member's votes or other contributions as the votes or other contributions are occurring.

No session of the House shall be conducted by electronic communication means unless live proceedings are made digitally available to the public.

To protect the public health and safety during such disaster or other emergency circumstance, the Speaker and Clerk may limit access to the physical location from which the Speaker is presiding to members of the General Assembly, General Assembly employees or contractors whose presence is directly required to conduct the session, the Capitol Police force, and the members of the media.

Notwithstanding Rule 18(e) or any other Rule, during the pendency of such disaster or other emergency circumstance, upon request of the chairman and with the approval of the Speaker, any standing committee of the House, or one of its subcommittees, may conduct a meeting by electronic communication means under the same conditions and requirements and with the same powers enumerated above, and without any requirement that a quorum be physically assembled in a single location. Any member of the committee or subcommittee participating in the meeting by electronic communication means shall be deemed to be in attendance for purposes of any quorum requirement and may vote on any matter taken up by the committee or subcommittee.

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