

2020 -- H 7757

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LC004521
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

A N A C T

RELATING TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY -- ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Introduced By: Representatives Filippi, Place, Newberry, Chippendale, and Nardone

Date Introduced: February 26, 2020

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 22-3 of the General Laws entitled "Organization of General
2 Assembly" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **22-3-18.1. Telephone and video conference voting.**

4 [For the purposes of receiving and recording the vote of members of the general assembly](#)
5 [in the event the governor declares a state of emergency and pursuant to the rules of the senate and](#)
6 [the house of representatives, the joint committee on legislative services shall provide a process or](#)
7 [procedure for the senate and house of representatives to be available for the use of the members of](#)
8 [the general assembly in casting and recording votes by telephone or video conference.](#)

9 SECTION 2. Section 22-11-3.1 of the General Laws in Chapter 22-11 entitled "Joint
10 Committee on Legislative Services" is hereby amended to read as follows:

11 **22-11-3.1. Rules and regulations.**

12 (a) The joint committee on legislative services is authorized and empowered to adopt any
13 rules and regulations that are deemed necessary to accomplish the purposes of this chapter, a copy
14 of which rules and regulations shall be filed with the secretary of state and available for public
15 inspection; provided, that each permanent and continuing office or agency within the legislative
16 department, established by statute and to which funds are specifically appropriated, will maintain
17 and be responsible for exercising its own internal financial and personnel controls. In the formation
18 of these rules and regulations, the joint committee shall take into consideration and conform to,

1 where practicable, existing policies governing financial and personnel practices within the
2 executive branch of government.

3 (b)(1) The joint committee on legislative services is authorized and empowered to adopt
4 rules and regulations, consistent with the rules of each house of the general assembly, designed to
5 provide electronic services and products to its elected members and, incrementally, to make
6 electronic services and products regarding its proceedings available to the citizens of this state. The
7 joint committee on legislative services shall prioritize general assembly proceedings and legislative
8 information to be made incrementally accessible in a timely manner, including:

9 ~~(1)~~(i) A list of all members of the general assembly with their addresses and telephone
10 numbers and all committees of the general assembly and their members;

11 ~~(2)~~(ii) The history and status of every bill introduced and amended in each current
12 legislative session;

13 ~~(3)~~(iii) The current calendars of the house and the senate and of all legislative committees;

14 ~~(4)~~(iv) The text of every bill introduced and to be printed in the current legislative session,
15 including the amended or substitute form of each bill, and the text of every bill as enacted;

16 ~~(5)~~(v) The general laws;

17 ~~(6)~~(vi) The Rhode Island Constitution; and

18 ~~(7)~~(vii) The senate and house journals.

19 (2) Pursuant to § 22-3-18.1, the joint committee on legislative services shall adopt rules
20 and regulations necessary to provide a process or procedure for all members of the general assembly
21 for casting and recording votes by telephone or video conference in accordance with all quorum
22 and notice requirements pursuant to the rules of the senate and house of representatives whenever
23 the governor declares a state of emergency.

24 (c) It shall be solely and exclusively within the discretion of the joint committee on
25 legislative services, when providing access, to include and require, in written contracts for
26 electronic services and products, provisions that:

27 (1) Protect the security and integrity of the information system of the general assembly;

28 (2) Limit any potential liability of the general assembly in providing public access to
29 electronic services and products;

30 (3) Ensure that access of non-disclosable information is prohibited;

31 (4) Provide protection against intentional or accidental disclosure, modification, or
32 destruction of records.

1 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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- 1 This act would allow members of the general assembly to cast votes by telephone or video
- 2 conference whenever the governor declares a state of emergency.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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