

2021 -- H 5006

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

AMENDING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS  
2019 AND 2020

Introduced By: Representative Rebecca M. Kislak

Date Introduced: January 12, 2021

Referred To: House Rules

1           RESOLVED, That section (11) of the rules for the House of Representatives adopted by  
2 the House of Representatives at its January session A.D. 2019 entitled "House Resolution  
3 Adopting the Rules of the House of Representatives for the years 2019 and 2020", be and the  
4 same is hereby amended to read as follows:

5           [Rules Pertaining to Committees](#)

6           (11)(a) The following standing committees shall be appointed each year in the month of  
7 January or as soon as convenient after the adoption of the House Rules:

- 8           A committee on conduct
- 9           A committee on corporations
- 10          A committee on environment and natural resources
- 11          A committee on finance
- 12          A committee on health, education and welfare
- 13          A committee on judiciary
- 14          A committee on labor
- 15          A committee on municipal government
- 16          A committee on rules
- 17          A committee on oversight
- 18          A committee on small business
- 19          A committee on special legislation

1 A committee on veterans' affairs.

2 (b) The Speaker shall appoint all standing committees and create such other  
3 subcommittees and committees as may be required from time to time and appoint thereto. All  
4 subcommittees and committees shall have proportionate minority membership when feasible.  
5 The Speaker, in consultation with the Minority Leader, shall be the appointing authority for  
6 minority membership on standing committees and subcommittees thereof, joint committees,  
7 boards and commissions. All vacancies occurring in any committee and subcommittee after they  
8 have once been named shall be filled in like manner by the Speaker. The Speaker, Majority  
9 Leader and Minority Leader shall be ex officio members with voting rights of all House  
10 committees but shall not be counted for purposes of determining a quorum. The Speaker shall  
11 have the authority to appoint the chair, first vice chair and second vice chair of each committee.  
12 In the event that the chair of a committee is unable to serve due to incapacity for medical or other  
13 reasons, the Speaker may appoint an acting chair for the period of such incapacity, which acting  
14 chair shall have all of the powers and duties of the chair. The chair shall determine all questions  
15 of procedure before the committee in cases not provided for in these rules.

16 (c) While committees normally conduct their business at the State House, during times of  
17 public health emergency, the chair and members of the committee may determine by a vote of the  
18 majority to change the location and manner of meeting, wherein committee hearings, including  
19 public testimony and votes, may occur through remote video conference. In addition, when  
20 individual members are unable to attend in person due to health considerations, if the committee  
21 is otherwise meeting in person, the individual may participate remotely, including for purposes of  
22 voting.

23 ~~(d)~~ (d) A committee shall not consider any bill in the absence of a quorum, which shall  
24 consist of a majority of the committee's membership. A quorum shall include those legislators  
25 present in person and those participating remotely.

26 ~~(e)~~ (e) All committee meetings shall be open to the public, but public participation shall  
27 be limited to testimony on the matters before the committee. The chair of any committee shall  
28 have the authority to limit the length of a witness's testimony in order to afford all witnesses the  
29 opportunity to be heard, to limit repetitiveness and duplication, or to maintain order and decorum.  
30 Any committee may accept written, in person and/or video testimony and during times of public  
31 health emergencies may limit in person testimony provided the committee accepts written and  
32 video testimony.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
HOUSE RESOLUTION  
AMENDING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS  
2019 AND 2020

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- 1 This resolution would amend the house rules to permit remote voting for house
- 2 committees and would permit written, in person or video testimony.

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